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LIFE

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT.

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BY

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4145.

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PITT at Walmer Castle had a return of gout, and also a sharp bilious attack, which confined him to his room for some days. During his retirement he had ample leisure to review the state of politics. He was more than ever convinced that Addington had committed some serious errors, both in foreign affairs and in measures of finance. He knew that he could not attend the House of Commons without being called upon to speak. He knew that he could not speak as he felt without damaging, and, perhaps, even overthrowing the Government. On the other hand he could not deny that a high part was

incumbent upon him as still in some degree the guardian of the public purse and of the national safety.

But since the letter of Pitt, which I have inserted, of the close of January, other and most serious considerations pressed upon him. He learnt that the dissensions with France were becoming day by day more dark and lowering. He learnt how large and inadmissible were the new pretensions that the First Consul had put forward. Would it be right then, would it be worthy of a high-minded politician, to run any risk of damaging or of overthrowing the Government at the very period when the question of Peace or War was at issue, and hung trembling in the scales? It was under the influence of these feelings that Pitt resolved to persevere in the course which he had recently adopted. He came to the decision to postpone, or indeed for the time to relinquish, his attendance in the House of Commons.

It was with these sentiments, and at this period, that the following letters were written :—

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Rose.

"DEAR ROSE, "Walmer Castle, Feb. 16, 1803.

"The return of something like fine weather gives me so much occupation here, and will probably give me so much health, that it would alone have tempted me a good deal to change my plan, and remain here some time longer. But, besides this selfish reason, I am more and more persuaded, by all that I see of things and parties, that any part I could take at present, if I were in town, would be more likely to do

harm than good; and that I am, therefore, in every point of view, better where I am. There are, however, many points in our situation, and particularly on the subject of finance, which I should have been very glad to talk over with you; and if it was not proposing to you anything very inconvenient, it would be a great satisfaction to me, if (whenever you are released from your Southampton Bill, or anything else you wish to attend) you could spare a few days to let me have the pleasure of seeing you here. According to my present notion, I should not be likely, if I can help it, to move from hence for some weeks. I am now quite free both from gout and bile, and am gaining strength every day. The picture from my windows this morning is as delightful as in the middle of summer.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"W. P."

Rose did accordingly repair to Walmer, and remained there several days. In his journal he notes: "Anxious as I was before I came here for Mr. Pitt's attendance in Parliament, I am a convert to the reasons which under a choice of very great difficulties incline him to remain in the country."

Mr. Pitt to Lord Chatham.

"Walmer Castle, Feb. 24, 1803.

"My dear Brother,

"Lord Camden tells me you were desirous of knowing whether I was yet coming to town. I have not hitherto fixed in my own mind any precise time, and I find so much benefit during this fine weather from

air and exercise here, that I wish to prolong my stay as much as I can; the more so, to say the truth, as I could hardly be in town without attending the House, and I do not see, in the present state of things, any advantage that would arise from the statement of my opinions. The subject of finance is, perhaps, one on which I may feel it impossible to avoid taking a part, unless measures should be brought forward in the course of the Session very different from anything I can expect either from Addington's printed speech, or from what I have since heard of his intentions. The line I must take in this respect will, however, very much depend on the nature of his final Budget for the year, which I suppose will hardly be brought on till after Easter. I should like much to be able to explain to you fully the nature of my opinions, as far as I am able to form them, and the grounds on which they rest; and I should certainly be inclined to make a short visit to town for that purpose only, if it were not for the reasons I have already given you.

"Ever, my dear brother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"Walmer Castle, Sunday,
Feb. 27, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"The very interesting state of things you describe, and the wish you express to see me, would be more than sufficient to determine me immediately to come for a few days to town, if by doing so I could have the satisfaction of talking over the subject with you as fully as you wish, without exposing myself to being drawn into consultations with others, which I really do not think, under the circumstances, would be fit or desirable.

"The bent of my opinion on a general view of the question before you, you may easily guess. It certainly leans strongly one way; and if I were under the necessity of forming a decision and acting upon it, much as I feel the difficulties which in either event the country will have to encounter, I believe I should have little hesitation in making the option. But the propriety of any line to be adopted is so blended with the consideration of the measures by which it is to be followed up, and with the mode of executing them, that I should feel it much more difficult to judge what it would be prudent and right for others to determine, and I should be very sorry that any weight given to my opinion should influence a decision so important in its consequences to those who are to form it, and to the public.

"I can, however, have no scruple in stating to you, *in confidence and for yourself only*, whatever occurs to me, if it can give any satisfaction to your mind, or in the smallest degree assist you in forming your own judgment. I will therefore endeavour to write to you more at large to-morrow than I should have time to do now, having been prevented by different interruptions from beginning my letter till near the time of the post going out.

"Ever, my dear brother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

"Walmer Castle, Feb. 28, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I will now endeavour to state to you the chief considerations which present themselves to me on the important question now at issue. They are partly those on which I conceive Government has hitherto

acted in its discussions on the subject of Malta, and partly those which are suggested by the recent proofs of Bonaparte's views in that quarter. It must, I think, have been generally felt that after going as far as we did in concession in the preliminary and definitive treaties, we were peculiarly bound to insist on the full benefit of the articles contained in them, and that where they might be found not to admit of literal execution, we could not be expected to acquiesce in any new arrangement that was not at least equally advantageous to us. This principle was strengthened by all the subsequent conduct of Bonaparte since the Peace, which was such as on former occasions would of itself have been thought fresh cause of actual war, and which at least justified and required additional jealousy and precaution in settling any point which might come into discussion; and the reasoning applied peculiarly to Malta, both as it was an object in so many ways important, and one with respect to which we had so much reason to suspect Bonaparte's designs. If the question had rested here, and, under merely these circumstances, Bonaparte had brought forward his present demand for our evacuating it before any satisfactory arrangement was formed for its security, such a demand would have appeared even then sufficiently extravagant, and such as we could not comply with, either honourably or safely. The step would seem tantamount to an absolute surrender of the island into the hands of France under an admission that the terms stipulated by the definitive treaty could not be executed, and after a fruitless attempt by a negotiation (known to be depending for many months) to obtain some new security.

"But humiliating and disgraceful as our situation would have been on this supposition, the case seems now to be still stronger. This demand is now brought

forward under circumstances which no longer leave us to reason about the nature of Bonaparte's further intentions in the East, but after what I consider as a public and authentic account of his determination to avail himself of the first moment in his power to regain possession both of Egypt and the Venetian Islands. I, of course, refer to Sebastiani's report; a state-paper which never could have been published at all, much less in the *Moniteur*, nor ever have been left uncontradicted, if it were not both genuine and conformable to Bonaparte's plans, and if he did not (for some reason or other) wish to proclaim those plans beforehand to the world. To choose such a moment for urging his present demand appears to me only a proof of the height to which he already carries his insolence, and his hope of being able to dictate without resistance; and if he succeeds in this attempt, it is impossible to doubt that he will proceed to realize the designs which he has announced. We must therefore expect, if we now concede to him, to be obliged in a short time afterwards to acquiesce in his seizure both of Egypt and the Seven Islands, and in all the dangers which would result from it; or we must then embark in the contest, having in the interval, with our eyes open, consented to abandon the best means of security for ourselves, and of annoyance to the enemy. On this view of the subject I certainly can hardly avoid concluding that immediate and certain war would be a less evil than such disgraceful and dangerous concession.

"I do not, however, hold it as certain that war would be the necessary consequence. There may be still some chance that a vigorous and firm line adopted by Government, if aided by early public declarations of full support from Parliament and the country, might enable us to carry our point without recurring to extremities. On this chance, however, I am by no means disposed to rely,

though in looking to possibilities I do not put it wholly out of the question. In forming a decision I should wish to consider the alternative as concession or immediate war. I have already stated the chief arguments which weigh with me against concession. For it, I conceive little can be urged but on a supposition of the impossibility, or at least the difficulty and uncertainty, of our being able now to meet the contest with adequate exertions; and the hope that by yielding now, we may be better prepared for it before it becomes absolutely unavoidable. I confess myself that I could not rest much on the hope of our being comparatively better prepared, as, if we encourage the enemy by our acquiescence at present, I fear we shall be driven to fight for some vital interest, or, perhaps, for our independence, within a shorter interval than could enable us to gain in point of resources anything that would at all counterbalance the fresh advantages which will have been obtained by France.

"With respect, however, to our present means, I own that I feel great anxiety. After the large establishments of this year, and so many months for extraordinary preparation, I cannot help hoping that in point of military and naval force we should begin the war in more strength than we have done on any former occasion. The greatest object of my anxiety is our finance, on which everything must so much depend. I do not, however, after full reflection, doubt the sufficiency of the country to provide for the expenses of seven or ten years of war without imposing burdens that would materially entrench on the comforts of the great body of the people, or ultimately affect our prosperity and credit. But I am convinced this can only be done by meeting at once the whole extent of our difficulties, and by raising within the year a still

larger proportion of the supplies than was done even in the last four years of the late war. On this plan I have no doubt that taxes may be found to answer all the purposes I have mentioned, and to prevent an accumulation of debt in the course of the war which must otherwise entail permanent burdens to an amount greater by many millions. But notwithstanding the clear ultimate advantage and economy of such a system, it certainly would require, in the first instance, an exertion which at first view would startle and alarm, and which cannot be effectually made without a *firm determination* on the part of Government, and without a real sense, both in Parliament and in the public, of the necessity of making it. Besides the renewal of the Income Tax (which I fear is rendered more difficult than its first imposition), an addition of many millions to our permanent taxes in the very first year is essential to the success of any such plan as I refer to. The difficulty of such an undertaking I certainly most strongly feel. A determination on Addington's part to attempt it and carry it through, I cannot help doubting, after what I have observed in his measures of finance in the present year; and if any less efficient system is resorted to, I certainly see little chance of any advantageous or honourable issue out of the contest, unless any lucky accident, such as we have no right to count upon, should speedily terminate it in our favour.

"On the whole you will see from what I have said, that if it is determined in the event of war to make the exertions that appear to be necessary, and it is thought practicable to carry them through, I should think war, with all its difficulties, preferable to acquiescence. On the other supposition, I hardly know how to choose between alternatives each so pregnant with the greatest mischief and danger. I have troubled you with a very

long detail, which I know not whether you will find at all useful in considering this question, but I was unwilling to withhold anything which has occurred to my own mind as material. I must only repeat my request, for reasons I stated yesterday, that you will consider what I have said as for yourself only.

"Ever, my dear brother, &c.,

"W. P."

At this time Mr. Pitt had established one of his most constant friends as almost his nearest neighbour. This was Lord Carrington, on whom, in the preceding summer, he had bestowed the Captaincy of Deal. The two Castles of Deal and Walmer are only a mile apart; and the new rooms constructed by Lord Carrington in the former, without impairing its fortified strength, made it, as it continues to be, a delightful sea-side residence.

At this time also my father, then Lord Mahon, was a frequent visitor at Walmer Castle. On leaving Lord Stanhope's house he had gone to pursue his studies at the German University of Erlang, or as now called Erlangen. He returned when he came of age, in December, 1802, and had at once before him some important and anxious business to consider with his lawyer, Mr. Estcourt. Mr. Pitt then and ever afterwards showed him the most generous kindness. He bestowed on him the best office in his gift as Lord Warden, the Lieutenancy of Dover Castle, which had annexed to it a salary of several hundred pounds a year, and which, though my father thought right to

resign it on succeeding to the Peerage, was usually held for life.

Here are two selected from several letters addressed by Mr. Pitt at this time to his young relative.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Mahon.

"DEAR MAHON, "Walmer Castle, Feb. 22, 1803.

"Your account of the communication you have received through Murray has given me great and unexpected pleasure. If Lord S. continues in the disposition he has expressed, it must, I think, enable you to settle your affairs on a footing much more satisfactory, both for the present and the future, than could otherwise be in your power.

. . . . . .

"If once the business is put in a course of reference, I should hope you might, without inconvenience, make another visit to this place and initiate yourself in the mysteries of the Court of Load Manage.[1] I shall rejoice much if Lord Carrington is able to accompany you; and I hope he will take up his quarters here, which he will find more comfortable than going to an uninhabited house. You see by this proposal that I have no thoughts of moving from hence at present. Indeed, if I can escape from the call of the House, which I hope will not be difficult, I shall probably be tempted to stay here for at least three or four weeks longer. The weather and the scene from my ramparts are now both delightful, and what no one can well form an idea of in the atmosphere of London. Many thanks for your books, which I have great pleasure in placing in

[1] The *Load Manage* is or was the Cinque-Port Court for the appointment and regulation of pilots.

my library. I must conclude here in order to pay my daily visit to my farm, which is going on most prosperously, though without the aid of the 'Farmer's Calendar.'

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

"Walmer Castle, March 15, 1803.

"DEAR MAHON,

"Thanks to a rainy morning which stops the plough, I enclose at length the epistle to Madame la Margrave.[2]

"Having made this happy beginning, I hope to go on paying my debts to my correspondents daily.

"I have not yet fixed any time for leaving this place, and begin to hope that I may prolong my stay till towards the middle or latter end of April. I shall be happy to see you here again as soon as suits your other engagements; but I think if you go to the Levee to-morrow, it would be rather better to stay over the Drawing-Room in next week. In the mean time I hope you will be able to make some progress with Estcourt.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

Meanwhile the Houses of Parliament were in active Session. One of the first affairs that came before the Commons was a new debt which, after some coy demur, was acknowledged by the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness had also put forward to the Government a claim to the arrears of the Duchy of Cornwall previous

[2] Of Brandenburg Bareith, who resided at Erlang. Lord Mahon had brought over a letter from Her Serene Highness to Mr. Pitt.

to his coming of age; and when Lord Castlereagh went to Bath, Addington had sent down by him a message requesting to know Pitt's opinion, whether it would be right to make a compromise upon the case. "My opinion," said Pitt, "inclines against a compromise. If the arrears are due, let them be paid. If not, the question of setting the Prince's income free should be considered separately."

Nor was Pitt much inclined to a vote for the latter object. "These debts,"—so he wrote to Rose on the 8th of March,—"have been contracted in the teeth of the last Act of Parliament, and in breach of repeated and positive promises." The Ministers, however, took a more indulgent view. They brought down a Royal Message, and induced the House of Commons to vote, for the discharge of the Prince's liabilities, the sum of 60,000*l.* annually, to be continued for three years.

It must be owned, I think, considering the large debts which were from time to time announced, both on the King's and on the Prince's part, that the public had some right to complain of the result. There was very little of splendour in the King's Court, and very little of morality in the Prince's.

But at this time all other topics were cast into the shade by the growing importance of the dissensions with France. New grounds of complaint had been alleged on either side. The English were much offended at the mission, by the First Consul, of Colonel Sebastiani to Egypt. His report was published in the *Moniteur* on the 30th of January; it contained many unjust aspersions upon the English army, and declared

that the whole people was sighing for the return of the French. Six thousand French troops, it was added, would be sufficient to conquer the country.

On the other hand, the French might complain that they found us tardy in evacuating Alexandria, and unwilling to relinquish Malta at all. They applied to us on this occasion a parody on the form of oath administered in England, and said that they required "the Treaty of Amiens, the whole Treaty of Amiens, and nothing but the Treaty of Amiens." In answer we declared that we had no intention to violate the treaty, and no wish to misconstrue its meaning. But see what aggressive steps had been taken by the Government of France, and what ambitious schemes avowed. See how since the Treaty it had grasped the dominion both of Piedmont and of Switzerland. So long as the First Consul continued to add every day to his power and strength, we could not be expected to show any readiness in decreasing ours, and least of all in the Mediterranean. We could not give up Malta without some safeguards—such as were stipulated at Amiens—that the possession of it would not be immediately resumed by the Cabinet of the Tuileries.

On this whole subject Lord Whitworth had an interview with the First Consul on the 18th of February. The conversation, or rather the monologue (for Lord Whitworth, as he stated, could put in very few words), was continued for two hours. Through nearly the whole of it General Bonaparte held a tone of menace and dictation such as English Ministers have never been accustomed to hear. It was language which betokened

great irritation on the one side, and which tended to produce it on the other.

As to the Treaty of Amiens, the First Consul declared, on this occasion, that he must insist on its literal fulfilment. He would rather, he said, see us in possession of the Faubourg St. Antoine than in possession of Malta! Here is the comment of M. Thiers, who repeats the story from Lord Whitworth's despatch, only transferring the name to Montmartre: "*Effroyable parole, qui s'est trop réalisée, pour le malheur de notre patrie!*"[3]

In the same conversation General Bonaparte complained anew of the libels that were published in London. There were two French newspapers, he added, paid by us to abuse him. Every wind, he said, which blew from England brought him only some fresh instance of our distrust and dislike.

The English Government, as I have shown, had long since directed the prosecution of Peltier by the Attorney-General, but nothing had as yet ensued from it. Unhappily the system of procrastination seems to be inherent in the law of England far more than in the law of any other country. Peltier's case was so much delayed, and the interval grew so wide between his offence and his conviction, that when the latter came at last, it entirely failed in removing the sense of injury which the former had aroused.

The trial of Peltier did not in fact come on till three days after the interview at the Tuileries which I have just related. On the 21st of February he appeared

[3] Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. iv. p. 298.

before Lord Ellenborough and a special jury. The alleged libels were easily brought home to him. He was defended in a most brilliant speech by Mr. Mackintosh, afterwards Sir James; but the jury, without a moment's hesitation, found him Guilty. Sentence against him was deferred; and from the progress of events in France, sentence against him in fact never was pronounced.

On the very same day on which Peltier was tried in London, an event occurred at Paris tending in no small degree to widen the breach between the two countries. According to the practice of that period, the First Consul sent down to the *Corps Législatif* an annual statement or *exposé* of the affairs of the Republic. Of his nearest neighbours he allowed himself to speak as follows:—"The Government may say with just pride that England alone is unable at the present time to contend against France." How far this statement was well founded is best shown by the events of the next succeeding years. But whether or not well founded, there could be none more certain to call forth the resentment of the nation so slightly esteemed.

The menacing language which General Bonaparte had used—both in private and in public, on the 18th and on the 21st—seemed the more momentous when his genius and energy of action were considered. It derived fresh importance also from the news that came, of armaments on an extensive scale preparing in the ports both of France and Holland. St. Domingo was alleged as the object, but it was natural that some apprehensions should be felt for England. Lord Chatham

anxiously communicated to Mr. Pitt the full details of the last despatches, and here is Mr. Pitt's reply:—

"Walmer Castle, March 2, 1803.

"My dear Brother,

"I thank you very much for your letter, which I have just received. It is the greatest satisfaction to me to find that our opinions on what is pending (as indeed I expected they would) so nearly coincide; and that Government is adopting what appears to me to be the wisest line that the circumstances admit. The Consul's own language certainly seems like the result of anything rather than settled determination or system, and is so incoherent and unaccountable as to leave some chance that he may be only bullying, and that firmness here may lead him to give way. But I own I rather think that the same extravagance and passion which appears in his conversation will govern his conduct, and will hurry him into extremities, though perhaps against his judgment.

"At all events I am sure you will agree with me, that we ought to be prepared for the possibility both of an immediate rupture and for his following it up, or rather accompanying it, by attempting to strike in the first instance some sudden blow on any vulnerable point. I conclude this will be so strongly felt that no time will be lost in putting into immediate readiness whatever means we possess, and especially those of floating defence on the coast, on which so much of our security against a *coup de main* must depend. I shall be much obliged to you for letting me know when anything material arises, which may probably be very soon. In the mean time pray have the goodness to send me one line saying whether our troops are likely to be still in Alexandria. I rather fear, from what I understand in town,

that an order had been sent to withdraw them, which it will now be too late to countermand. The new system announced to be forming for Turkey, joined to the Consul's language about that country, seems to make this a point of double importance.

"I am continuing to gain ground every day that I stay here, which I hope to be able to do till towards the end of the month, when I shall probably move for a few weeks to Bath.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

Pitt, as we have seen, had strictly enjoined his brother not to show his letters; but it may be doubted whether at this period his injunction was observed. It may be thought that to Addington at least his letters were probably shown. Certain it is that when, in conversation on the 9th of March, Addington was asked by Lord Malmesbury whether the new course of vigour upon which the Government had just entered was known and approved by Pitt, Addington answered that it was. Now it does not appear that Pitt was at that time in correspondence with any of the Ministers except Lord Chatham, or that Addington could have derived his information from any other source.[4]

Emboldened by their previous knowledge of Pitt's opinions, the Ministers had decided on prompt and energetic measures. Addington was in high spirits.

[4] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 225. In another passage (p. 276) Lord Malmesbury explains the matter more simply by impeaching the veracity of Addington; an explanation which I altogether reject.

On the morning of the 8th, when he met Lord Malmesbury in Hyde Park, he gaily called out to him in French, "*Tout va bien; vous serez content de nous.*" On the afternoon of the same day he carried down to the House of Commons a Message from the King. His Majesty announced the very considerable military preparations in the ports of France and Holland, and declared that he judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution.

Next day, the 9th, Addresses in reply from both Houses, assuring His Majesty of their loyal support, were moved and carried without one dissentient voice. On the 10th there was another Message from the King, with a view to call out the Militia; and on the 11th there was carried in the Commons a vote for ten thousand additional men in the sea-service. Thus it will be seen that no energy was spared, and no time was lost.

Unhappily, however, the Message of the 8th of March gave most dire offence to the First Consul. On the 13th Lord Whitworth went as usual to the public reception at the Tuileries. There, he says, "the First Consul accosted me evidently under very considerable agitation. . . . He immediately said, 'And so you are determined to go to war.' 'No,' I replied, 'we are too sensible of the advantages of peace.' '*Nous avons*,' said he, '*déjà fait la guerre pendant quinze ans.*' As he seemed to wait for an answer, I observed only, '*C'en est déjà trop.*' '*Mais*,' said he, '*vous voulez la faire encore quinze ans, et vous m'y forcez.*'" General Bonaparte made also other remarks, in a highly offended tone, on our alleged infraction of the treaty. "All this,"

adds Lord Whitworth, "passed loud enough to be overheard by two hundred persons who were present."

Nevertheless the great question was by no means yet decided. Negotiations for some satisfactory adjustment of the points at issue were still pursued at Paris, with a diminished expectation indeed, but no diminished wish for peace.

It was natural that at such a crisis the eyes of Englishmen should turn to their greatest living statesman. It was natural that they should desire to see him again at the helm. "Pitt's return talked of and wished,"—so wrote Wilberforce on the 8th. Nearly in the same strain spoke Pitt's old enemy Philip Francis. On the 11th of March he expressed himself as follows in the House of Commons: "To the Ministers personally I have no sort of objection. For some among them I have great personal regard; to none of them the smallest personal ill-will. But this is no time for compliments. . . . . The country is surrounded with difficulties, exposed to distresses, and possibly approaching a contest for its existence. In this awful situation, whether I advert to some who are present or to others who are absent, the melancholy and astonishing fact is, that out of the councils and government of the country, at such a moment as this, all the eminent abilities of England are excluded. In fair weather a moderate share of skill may be sufficient. For the storm that seems to be coming, other pilots should be provided. If the ship sinks, we must all go down with it."

Addington himself was by no means insensible to the wishes which he heard expressed around him. He saw

the dangers that were looming in the distance. He saw that the time was come to invite the return of Pitt to office. But in the first instance he devised a middle course. Neither Pitt nor yet himself was to be Prime Minister. Pitt and Addington were to be Secretaries of State, with an option to Pitt, if he should prefer it, to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Above them there was to be a First Lord of the Treasury personally welcome to both, and as a person fulfilling that condition Addington had thought of Lord Chatham. It was further contemplated among the other new arrangements, should they take effect, that Lord St. Vincent, who was filling his office very badly, and who desired to be relieved from it, should be replaced at the Admiralty by Lord Melville.

Lord Melville himself entered into the design with zeal, and undertook to be the channel of its communication. Accordingly he set out for Walmer Castle, where he arrived on the morning of Sunday the 20th. Some weeks later, as we shall see, Pitt related the scene to Wilberforce; and in after years Wilberforce used to tell his friends of it as follows: "Dundas was confiding in his knowledge of all Pitt's ways and feelings, and after dinner and port wine began cautiously to open his proposals. But he saw it would not do, and stopped abruptly. 'Really,' said Pitt, with a sly severity—and it was almost the only sharp thing I ever heard him say of any friend—'I had not the curiosity to ask what I was to be.'"[5]

[5] Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. iii. p. 219.

But although the conversation might in this manner be cut short on the first evening, Pitt did not refuse next day to hear and to consider the proposals of his friend. He met them, however, with a decided negative. His view of the whole subject is most clearly explained in a letter which Lord Melville wrote to Addington at Pitt's desire, and it may be said under his dictation. It has been published by Dean Pellew, from the original among Lord Sidmouth's papers; and there is also a copy among Mr. Pitt's.

Lord Melville to Mr. Addington.

"Walmer Castle, March 22, 1803.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I arrived here on Sunday, and found Mr. Pitt much improved in point of health. He was alone, and there was no interruption in conversing with him on the various topics touched upon in my interview with you on Friday last. As matter of private gratification, Mr. Pitt has the reverse of any wish to return to official situation; and if the present administration prove themselves competent to carry on the government with reasonable prospect of success, and are determined afterwards to adhere to those leading principles of foreign and domestic policy which he has long considered essential, his wishes to be able to support them out of office are precisely the same they were at their first formation. He does not, however, disguise from me that many things have occurred, both in relation to their transactions with Foreign Powers (so far as he has the means of judging of them) and with regard to the financial operations and statements of the Treasury,

which have given him sincere concern; and if it were not under the circumstances of the present critical moment of the country, he doubts how far, considering the connexion he has had for these many years with its financial affairs, he was at liberty to refrain so long from stating to the public the fatal errors which he is satisfied exist in the statement made with regard to the amount of the national revenue compared with the charges upon it. As things now stand, he is induced, from all these considerations, for the present at least, to adhere to the resolution of continuing his residence where he is, and refraining from taking part in the discussions of Parliament.

"I did not conceal from him the idea you mentioned of his returning to a share of the Government, with a person of rank and consideration at the head of it perfectly agreeable to him, and I even specified the person you had named. But there was no room for any discussion on that part of the subject, for he stated at once, without reserve or affectation, his feelings with regard to any proposition founded on such a basis. The uncertain state of his health makes him still doubt how far in any case he could be justified in undertaking a lead in public affairs, under the difficulties now existing or impending. The moment of a negotiation still in suspense, he thinks in every view unfit for his taking part; but in any event nothing could induce him to come forward except an urgent sense of public duty, and a distinct knowledge that his services (such as they may be) are wished and thought essential, both in *the highest quarter* and by all those with whom (in consequence of any arrangements that might be formed on that ground) he might have to act confidentially. He is firmly of opinion that he could not, on this supposition, have any chance of answering his own ideas of being useful

to the country in one of the great points on which he lays a principal stress, but by returning to the management of its finances.

"Besides this consideration, he stated, not less pointedly and decidedly, his sentiments with regard to the absolute necessity there is in the conduct of the affairs of this country, that there should be an avowed and real Minister, possessing the chief weight in the council, and the principal place in the confidence of the King. In that respect there can be no rivality or division of power. That power must rest in the person generally called the First Minister, and that Minister ought, he thinks, to be the person at the head of the finances. He knows, to his own comfortable experience, that notwithstanding the abstract truth of that general proposition, it is noways incompatible with the most cordial concert and mutual exchange of advice and intercourse amongst the different branches of executive departments; but still if it should come unfortunately to such a radical difference of opinion that no spirit of conciliation or concession can reconcile, the sentiments of the Minister must be allowed and understood to prevail, leaving the other members of administration to act as they may conceive themselves conscientiously called upon to act under such circumstances. During the last administration such a collision of opinion I believe scarcely ever happened, or, at least, was not such as the parties felt themselves obliged to push to extremities; but still it is possible, and the only remedy applicable to it is in the principle which I have explained.

"In a conversation of two days, which involved in it the discussion of such a variety of topics, it is impossible to give you more than an abstract or very general outline of the heads of our conversation. I have made it

merely a recital, not intermixed with any comments, opinions, or suggestions of my own. You expressed a wish to hear from me without any delay; and I trust the explanation I have given you is perfectly sufficient to convey to you such a view of the subject as may enable you to draw your own conclusions and regulate your own determination.

"Yours sincerely and affectionately,

"MELVILLE."

To this communication I shall subjoin another, written only three days afterwards:

Mr. Pitt to Lord Chatham.

"Walmer Castle, March 25, 1803.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"I was much obliged to you for the letter which Lord Melville brought me. By this time I hope you may have received an answer which may give some prospect of ending so anxious a state of suspense. I feel, however, with you how difficult and delicate it may be to bring the discussion speedily to a satisfactory and decisive point, though on the other hand the danger is evident of allowing Bonaparte time to strengthen whatever part of his preparations in Europe and abroad is now defective; after which he will probably choose his own moment for carrying his terms (whatever they may then be) or going to war. Much of course must depend on the explanation which you can give to the public of the ground on which you can take your stand.

"I do not know whether you are apprised of the conversation which Addington held with Lord Melville previous to his coming here, or have talked with the latter since his return. My sentiments on the subject

are such as I could have no difficulty in stating without reserve, and are contained in a letter for Addington, which Lord Melville wrote from hence, and which he will at any time show you. I trust you will think that my opinions could not be different from what you will there find them. I am still undecided about Bath; but unless Farquhar really lays great stress on it, I think I am better, and I am sure I am more comfortable, where I am.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

Addington had by no means expected this positive determination on the part of Pitt. But as a highly honourable man he took a self-denying course. He resolved that no pretensions of his own should stand in the way of the public good in the return of Pitt to office. For that object he resolved to make any sacrifice short of the entire dissolution of the Government. He applied at once to Mr. Long as a most intimate friend both of Pitt and himself. At his request that gentleman set out for Walmer Castle, the bearer of a message that Mr. Addington desired to reinstate Mr. Pitt as Prime Minister, if in a personal interview, which he hoped might speedily take place, their general ideas of the new system should be found to coincide.

Mr. Long arrived at Walmer on the 29th, and remained only a single night. On hearing the message thus conveyed, Pitt readily agreed to the interview proposed. He undertook to meet Addington at Bromley Hill on Sunday the 10th of next month. But as Mr. Long was getting into his chaise to return to town, he saw Lord Grenville drive up to the gate. To that visit

Addington in his own mind attached no small importance. To that visit—to the influence exerted at that juncture by Lord Grenville—Addington ever afterwards ascribed the ill-success of the negotiation which ensued.[6]

Nor was Addington, I think, wrong in this conjecture. There is on record, and there has since been published under the title of 'Lord Grenville's Narrative,' a full statement drawn up by himself of the conversations which he held at Walmer.[7] It appears from his own account how hostile to Addington was his language, and how uncompromising was the course which he advised. Thus for instance—speaking in the name also of Lord Spencer, Mr. Windham, and his other immediate friends—he said to Mr. Pitt that under the present circumstances of public difficulty they might consent to sit in the same Cabinet with Mr. Addington and Lord Hawkesbury. "But," he added, "I see very little probability of our agreeing to extend that acquiescence so far as to their holding any efficient offices of real business." It seems, then, that if Grenville's negative should prevail, Pitt was to declare that neither Addington, nor yet Hawkesbury—neither the Prime Minister *in presenti*, nor the Prime Minister as it chanced *in futuro*—were worthy of the office of a Secretary of State, which the first expected, and which the latter already held!

Mr. Long, on his return to London, addressed to Pitt the following account of his further communications with the Ministry.

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[6] Life of Lord Sidmouth, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 118.

[7] See the Courts and Cabinets of George III., vol. iii. pp. 282-290.

Mr. Long to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR PITT, "Bromley Hill, April 3, 1803.

"I am anxious to give you some account of what passed between Addington and myself upon my return, reserving details upon the whole subject till we meet. He seemed extremely anxious that you should not consider a pending negotiation as any obstacle to coming forward at the present moment, but it is hardly necessary to say what he stated upon this subject, because he has since altered his opinion, and rather thinks the fit time would be when the negotiation is brought to a point *either way*, which (in conjunction with Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and your brother) he is satisfied will be determined before you meet at Bromley Hill. Upon the whole question of arrangement he seemed disposed to adopt what you had authorised me to state, not as anything settled, but as a general idea upon the subject, but at the same time expressed great difficulties about Lord Hobart (none about Lord Pelham). He ended this part of the subject by saying that of course you were the best judge of those persons who had claims upon you, but that he trusted you would not decide anything upon this point (if the thing proceeded to that length) without also considering the fair pretensions of those who had claims upon him. I instanced Bragge, Smyth, Lord C. Spencer, and Wickham, as persons *accidentally* placed in the situations they held, and whom it might be necessary to call upon to give way: he admitted the justice of what I said upon all these persons, and of the possible necessary arrangement respecting them, but added that he believed the last particularly agreeable to the Chancellor of Ireland and the Lord Lieutenant, and also well qualified for his office. With respect to Lord

Grenville, he thought it impossible to admit him or any of his friends at the present moment without a marked degradation of himself and his colleagues, but that he could not mean to proscribe them, or to preclude you from taking whatever assistance you thought right at any future time. I then mentioned Canning and Rose: he said the first had been personally offensive to him; but upon my submitting to him whether he could justify the suffering even personal offence to stand in the way of what he had taken so much pains to convince me was a necessary public arrangement, he seemed very much softened upon this point, and with respect to Rose he stated no objection. There was no difficulty in leaving the vacancies at the Treasury, provided something else was done for Broderick, for whom he had pledged himself to provide. He then showed me a letter from Lord St. Vincent, requesting, on account of his state of health, that he would find him a successor as soon as he conveniently could, and expressed a wish to send the papers which referred to the points upon which you desired information. It is very probable you may want further information upon these subjects, which of course you can have at Bromley Hill.

"I saw Lord Castlereagh the next day: very anxious that you should be induced to come into the proposal, even during negotiation, if, contrary to all appearances, it should be protracted. He argued the cases of war, of peace, and of protracted negotiation very ably, as each affording sufficient grounds for your placing yourself at the head of the Government. If we were led into war, no person could conduct it with effect but yourself. You could prevent the negotiation spinning out to a disadvantageous length; and in peace the state of parties was the ground upon which he urged the necessity of your taking the Government. Neither he nor Lord Hawkes-

bury concealed from me the *necessity of a change.* Lord H. was of opinion Lord Grenville could not possibly come in under this arrangement, but seemed to think there would not be any difficulty at a future period. . . . I have made some endeavours to obtain the opinion of the City: as far as I have been able to ascertain it, it is uniform—a very strong wish that you should take the lead in Government, but an almost equally strong opinion that Grenville should be no part of it. Thornton gave me some strong grounds for supposing this was the general opinion upon both points; but as I know how often people give their own opinion as the public opinion, only for the purpose of strengthening it, I receive a public opinion with some caution. At the same time I have heard the [same] from so many quarters, that I believe it is not mistaken; and there is one point at least in which I think you will concur with me —that pending the negotiation it would be extremely prejudicial to yourself to take office with Grenville; for if it ended in war, his influence would be supposed to have occasioned it; and things are certainly in that state in which it is the general wish that we should at least give ourselves every fair chance of preserving peace. . . . . .

"I have only had time to scribble this as fast as I could since Huskisson told me he was going to Walmer. I hope you will find it intelligible.

"Ever yours,

"C. L."

On the 3rd of April, the same day on which Mr. Long wrote the letter which I have just inserted, the Dowager Countess of Chatham died at Burton Pynsent. So far as I can trace, there had been no previous illness to cause alarm, and her sons were not summoned to

attend her. Mr. Rose, who was alone with Mr. Pitt at Walmer Castle, has an entry in his journal as follows:— "April 8, 1803. Mr. Pitt talked a good deal to me respecting the death of his mother, and of feelings awakened by that event."

Of Lady Chatham it is stated by a contemporary writer: "Her death is severely felt by the poor cottagers in the neighbourhood. During the inclement season her Ladyship's bounty was the means of their very existence. When in health it was no uncommon thing to meet her in the park of Burton Pynsent during the coldest weather carrying a bundle containing necessaries for the relief of the indigent. She has often been seen to enter the abode of distress with blankets, warm clothing, and food, which she has ordered liberally to be distributed."[8] It is added that the only return she ever asked from these poor people was their regular attendance on Sundays in the parish church. We are further told that her bounty was by no means confined to her own neighbourhood, but was "continually directed to the relief of individuals in different parts of the kingdom."

The remains of this much respected and lamented lady being conveyed from Burton Pynsent to Lady Warren's house in Kensington Gore, were, on the 16th of April, interred in Westminster Abbey. They were placed in the same vault as those of her husband and of her eldest daughter. In that vault Mr. Pitt was subsequently laid; in that vault also the second Earl and the second Countess of Chatham.

[8] Ann. Register, 1803, p. 384.

CHAPTER XXXV.

1803.

Interview between Pitt and Addington — Pitt's proposals negatived by the Cabinet — The King's displeasure with Pitt — Comments of Fox — Review of the negotiation — *Ultimatum* of the British Government rejected by the First Consul — War with France declared — Pitt resumes his attendance in the House of Commons — Great speeches of Pitt and Fox — Proposed mediation of Russia — Tierney appointed Treasurer of the Navy — Proposed votes of censure — Canning's satirical poems — The Budget — Charles Yorke's plan for the defence of the country — The Military Service Bill — The Property Duty Bill — The Volunteers — Renewed conspiracies in Ireland — Murder of Lord Kilwarden.

BOTH to attend his mother's funeral, and to keep his appointment with the First Lord of the Treasury, Pitt set out from Walmer Castle on the 9th of April, and proceeded to Bromley Hill. Next day, according to promise, Addington appeared. A long conversation ensued. Pitt began by saying that if any change was to be made, it must be by the King's desire. He must receive, in the first place, His Majesty's express commands, and must hold himself at liberty to submit for His Majesty's consideration a list of persons from both the late and the present administration. He must also hold himself at liberty to communicate fully with Lord Grenville and Lord Spencer respecting the arrangement. And he must further stipulate that the arrangement should not take place till the foreign negotiation should be com-

pletely over, and the question of peace or war be decided.

To all these preliminaries Addington cheerfully agreed. But he expressed an anxious hope that Pitt would not insist on restoring Lord Grenville, Lord Spencer, and Mr. Windham to office. He could not forget how keen and thorough-going was the opposition which he had so recently encountered from them. The answer of Pitt on this point gave him little satisfaction. Nor was he much better pleased with the idea which Pitt threw out relating to himself. Pitt suggested that Addington should accept a peerage, together with the Speakership of the House of Lords. The Speakership in the Lords would therefore be disjoined from the office of Chancellor, but the income of it was to be made up to the holder of the Great Seal. Such a separation of Parliamentary and judicial duties had often been desired as conducive to the public interest. To effect it on this occasion would be to effect a most wise reform. It would place Addington in a situation, not indeed of political power, but of authority and dignity, exactly similar to that which he had filled with such general applause during nearly twelve years.

Addington, though a good deal mortified at this proposal, did not then enlarge upon it. But he again expressed his apprehension that the return of the Grenvilles would have an unfavourable effect upon the public mind. Finally he took his leave and returned to London, wishing to have time, as indeed Pitt advised him, to reflect on the whole plan.

On the 11th Pitt called on Rose at his house in

Palace Yard, and communicated to him what had passed the day before. He then returned to Bromley Hill. There, on the evening of the 12th, he received a note from the Prime Minister. Addington wrote that he desired to consult the Cabinet, and would do so the next day. Of his personal position he said that he had "insurmountable objections" to the Speakership of the House of Lords; but that if the arrangement took effect, he would most readily and willingly sacrifice all pretensions of his own. Some enemies of Addington have looked upon this self-abnegation as only simulated; for my part, I am persuaded that it was quite sincere.

Addington, in the same note, proposed to go again to Bromley Hill on the 14th, and added, "In the mean time I shall entertain the hope that you may not feel it necessary to adhere in its full extent to the proposition which you have made."

In replying to this note Pitt discouraged a second visit, since he said that he had nothing to add to the explicit statement which Addington had already heard, and since his opinion on that point could not admit of alteration.

Meanwhile, on the 13th, the Cabinet met at Lord Chatham's house; and on the 14th Addington made known by letter the result to Pitt. The advice of his colleagues, he said, was wholly in the negative. They felt —so wrote their chief—that the interests of the public would be injuriously affected by the declared opinions of some of those who were proposed to be comprehended in the new arrangement. To the copy which he kept

of this letter Lord Sidmouth subsequently added, in his own hand, the note, "namely, Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham." But even without such a comment the allusion was abundantly clear. Mr. Pitt, on the spur of the moment, replied only as follows:

"MY DEAR SIR, "Bromley Hill, April 14, 1803.

"I need only acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and am

"Yours sincerely,

"W. PITT."

Next day, however, it occurred to Pitt, that since the last proposal to him and his reply had passed only in private conversation, they were liable to be misapprehended or misconstrued. He therefore wrote again, and at some length, to Mr. Addington, not at all—and this he was careful to explain—as seeking to renew the late negotiation, which, on the contrary, he said he considered "now finally and absolutely closed," but only as desiring to recapitulate and place beyond dispute its principal points. Addington replied at length, and some further correspondence, in part of a controversial kind, ensued between them.

Mr. Pitt, after attending his mother's funeral on the 16th, had remained in town two days. On the 18th he dined at the Bishop of Lincoln's, where he met only Mr. Rose. He proceeded to pass a day with Lord Grenville at Dropmore, and then one or two with Lord Carrington at High Wycombe. It was from Wycombe, and on the 21st, that he wrote again to Mr. Addington, in rejoinder to the last communication.

Politicians of all shades were now eager for some statement of what had passed. The accounts which Pitt gave on the one part, and Addington gave on the other, were found to differ in some of the details. These were of slight importance, and as Lord Macaulay well observes, by no means such as to imply any intentional violation of truth on either side. For, as Lord Macaulay goes on to say, such a dispute often arises after negotiations conducted by word of mouth, even when the negotiators are men of the strictest honour.[1]

The two statesmen were, however, much incensed against each other. The progress of their alienation may be traced even in the forms of their correspondence. At the beginning of the year Pitt had always subscribed himself to Addington "Yours affectionately." From Bromley Hill it was "Yours sincerely;" and from Wycombe Abbey it grew to be "Dear Sir, your faithful and obedient servant." In his replies Addington always acted *Regis ad exemplar*—that is, exactly conformed in this respect to the varying precedents of Pitt.

It was not till the 20th of the month that Mr. Addington stated, in any manner, the transaction to the King. This was at an audience after His Majesty's Levee. The King might well feel a little chafed at being no earlier consulted. But the fault of this, if any, was certainly with the Prime Minister. Nevertheless the Royal displeasure seems to have turned wholly

[1] Biographies, p. 219, ed. 1860.

against the retired statesman. "He desires to put the Crown in commission—he carries his plan of removals so extremely far and high that it might reach me;" such are the expressions recorded of George the Third upon this occasion. A caustic French proverb,—less untrue than we might wish it to be—*les absens ont toujours tort*, — may, perhaps, occur to the reader's mind.

The object of Mr. Pitt in his communication of the 21st from High Wycombe, and in another subsequently, was to request of Addington that if he mentioned the matter at all to the King—as Pitt presumed that he must—he would lay before His Majesty all the letters which had passed. This Addington promised to do, and did accordingly on the 27th. But the King refused to read the letters, or to take any notice of them. Two days afterwards he said to Lord Pelham, "It is a foolish business from one end to the other. It was begun ill, conducted ill, and terminated ill."[2]

The comment of Mr. Fox in his private correspondence is not a little bitter, and, as I think, not a little unfair to Mr. Pitt. On the 1st of April he writes thus to Mr. Grey:—"There is some talk of Pitt, but I believe all idle. He knows his own insignificance, and does not like showing it." But the friends of Mr. Fox have since found it more convenient to reverse his ground of accusation. Instead of "consciousness of insignificance," they have put it "arrogant assumption of merit."

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[2] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 187.

It is alleged, in the private journal kept by Mr. Abbot, that "the conduct of Mr. Pitt in the whole transaction is very much disapproved by Lords Melville, Chatham, Castlereagh, Hawkesbury, and Mr. Steele." Of this sweeping statement, however, I find no confirmation in any of the private letters of that time; and it is certainly at variance with the subsequent conduct of some at least of the persons named. The remark of the Duke of York at the same period is repeated by Lord Malmesbury, not on hearsay or on rumour, but as addressed to himself: — "In my own view of the transaction, both parties were in the wrong. It has been so managed as to put Pitt's return to office, though more necessary than ever, at a greater distance than ever."

On reviewing this affair with no difficult calmness, now that the scene is wholly changed, and that all the actors have passed away, we may perhaps be inclined to reverse the Duke of York's opinion, and to say that both parties were in the right. Both appear to me to have acted with entire rectitude and honour. Both appear to me to have shown the most scrupulous fidelity to their personal friends. Pitt cannot be censured for his determination to submit to the King, on again becoming his Prime Minister, a list of the best and ablest Ministry which it was in his power to form. He would not have fulfilled his bounden duty to his Sovereign had he, in commercial phrase, offered a second-rate article when he might have secured a first-rate. As little can Addington be blamed for adhering to the principles of his own government, and seeking to ex-

clude from office, even on strictly public grounds, the statesmen who had bitterly opposed and reviled that government on the great question of the peace, and on every other question during the last year and a half. The charges of arrogance on Pitt's side, and of duplicity on Addington's, when we examine them, fall alike to the ground. It is clear, when we strip away the accessories, and come to the bone and marrow of this negotiation, that it failed solely from one point—from the proposal of including Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham in the new arrangement. The upshot is then that in April, 1803, Pitt was unwilling to return to office unless it were open to him to propose to his Sovereign that he should return with the Grenvilles. It is a fact that may deserve to be compared with the same regard shown by the elder Pitt to the elder Grenville, then Earl Temple, in May, 1765. It may also deserve to be borne in mind when we proceed to the events of May, 1804.

From Wycombe Abbey Mr. Pitt went again to Bromley Hill, and from Bromley paid a visit to Wilderness. Thence, after some days, he returned to Walmer Castle. Some account of one of those days is supplied by Wilberforce's Diary:—"April 24. Much pressed by Lord Camden to go to Wilderness, Lord Camden's, to meet Pitt and hear the account of the late negotiation. I have consented.—April 25. Set off about half-past two to Wilderness with Lord Camden, in his chaise. To Long's, Bromley Hill. There found Pitt. Saw the place sweetly pretty, and with Pitt *tête-à-tête* to Wilderness. Heard the complete story of the late

negotiation with Addington. Pitt's plan of defending the country, if war. His mind of the same superior cast. Did not get to dinner till almost eight o'clock. William Long,[3] Lord Camden, Pitt, and I, chatted till bedtime: half-past twelve.—April 26. After breakfast, long discussion with Pitt. Talked about Navy's state, as day before. Then read loungingly and walked out. I fear the morning was too much wasted. . . . Oh! Lord, make me more transformed into thine image!"

On his return to Walmer Castle Mr. Pitt lived for some time longer in retirement, and awaited the issue of the negotiations with France. Let me add one of his letters of this period, as addressed to my father:—

"DEAR MAHON, "Walmer Castle, May 2, 1803.

"I was obliged to write so many more letters than usual yesterday, that, even with the advantage of a rainy day, I could not find time to answer yours. Your two proposed letters I return under another cover. They seem to me to be perfectly proper, and to want no alterations but the very slight ones which you will see I have suggested.

"The Isis, I find, passed a few days ago through the Downs without stopping in her way to Spithead; and the papers announce that she is to carry Gambier again to Newfoundland. In that case, is James to remain in her? A second voyage thither is not the pleasantest destination, but perhaps (if war does not take place) it is better than any other.

"I shall be very glad to learn the result of your con-

[3] The Rev. W. Long was a brother of Mr. Charles Long. In September, 1804, he was named a Canon of Windsor on the recommendation of Pitt.

sultation with Estcourt, and happy to see you here whenever it suits you. If you foresee the time of your coming a day or two before, pray let me know, as possibly you may find Lord and Lady Melville here, and some other of our friends. Do not let this induce you to defer your visit. I only mention it because it may perhaps be necessary to quarter one or two of the party at the Cottage. The weather has been so bad that I have scarcely seen Leith, or any other Cinque Ports' oracle, to consult about a Court of Load Manage; but I doubt whether any of the controverted points can be so well decided before Midsummer. I enclose a letter which I found here, probably (by the post-mark) from the Margravine.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. P."

The "James" whom Mr. Pitt here mentions was James Hamilton Stanhope, youngest brother of Lord Mahon. He had entered the Navy, but conceiving a strong distaste to that profession, he soon afterwards exchanged it for the Army, in which Charles Stanhope was already serving. To both these brothers, shut out from a father's care, Mr. Pitt extended a most constant and most generous kindness.

Meanwhile the negotiations at Paris were tending to an unprosperous issue. Malta was still the main point in dispute. In the course of March and April several expedients on the subject were proposed in a conciliatory spirit by the English Government. But the French would be content with nothing but immediate restitution. They would not take into account either their own aggressive course upon the Continent since

the Treaty of Amiens, or the absence of any such securities for the independence of Malta as that Treaty contemplated. Our *ultimatum* was that we should retain possession of Malta for a period of ten years; that we should then give up the island to the inhabitants, and not to the Knights; and that as a naval station in the Mediterranean the neighbouring island of Lampedosa should be ceded to us by the King of Naples without opposition on the part of France. If, moreover, Holland should be evacuated by the French troops, and some stipulations be made in favour of the King of Sardinia and of Switzerland, England would consent to acknowledge the new Italian States. These terms the First Consul rejected.

At this period Mr. Fox took care in his public speeches to express no opinion in favour of the French. But he was not equally reserved in his familiar correspondence. Thus in March he writes to Mr. Grey: "At present I am more convinced than ever that if it is war, it is entirely the fault of the Ministers, and not of Bonaparte." Still more decisive is his language in June to another correspondent when he observes that "Addington by his folly has contrived to lay bare the injustice of our cause."[4] It is difficult, surely, to maintain that opinion in the teeth of such facts as I have already told. In our own time at least the ablest men of Fox's party have held a very different view. Lord Macaulay considers the breach with France as

[4] Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, vol. iii. p. 404, and vol. iv. p. 9.

reopened through the dominating tone of the First Consul, which he describes as "insupportable." It grew clearer and clearer—he goes on to say—that a war for the dignity, the independence, the very existence of our nation was at hand.[5]

The *ultimatum* of England being positively declined by France, no hope of peace remained. On the 12th of May Lord Whitworth left Paris, on the 16th General Andréossy left London. On this last day also a Message from the King was brought down to both Houses—to the Peers by Lord Pelham, to the Commons by Mr. Addington. His Majesty announced that the negotiation with France was over, and he appealed with confidence to the public spirit of his brave and loyal subjects. It was resolved to take the King's Message into consideration on that day week, the 23rd.

On the 18th there was published a Declaration of War in the name of the King, relating at length the course of the negotiation, and the grounds upon which we had proceeded. On the same day, by Royal command, the diplomatic papers which had passed were laid upon the Table in both Houses.

A counter Declaration of War was issued on the part of France. Moreover the First Consul took a step which was unpopular in France itself, and which very few even of his warmest partisans have since defended. In the terms of a Decree, issued in haste on the 22nd of May, several thousand unoffending English subjects who were quietly travelling or sojourning in the French

[5] Biographies, p. 217, ed. 1860.

dominions under the faith of treaties were seized and thrown into prison. The plea assigned by some apologists at Paris was that two French vessels had been captured in the Bay of Audierne in Brittany under the English letters of marque, and before the war had been duly declared. The fact is, however, that this capture did not take place till the 20th of the month, eight days after the English ambassador had set out from Paris. Had even the fact been otherwise, it will scarcely at present be alleged that it was sufficient to justify the scope of the Consul's Decree.

The English prisoners seized on this occasion were for the most part detained in captivity at Verdun and other places during the whole remainder of the war. This measure, productive as it was of great individual suffering and hardship, proved to be no less impolitic than it was unjust. No other in Napoleon's whole career tended more in British minds to dim the lustre of his glories, and to rouse against him what may be regarded as the main obstacle to his ultimate triumph in his designs of European conquest—the sturdy spirit of the British people.

It was under these circumstances of renewed war and impending dangers that Mr. Pitt felt it his duty to resume without further delay his attendance in the House of Commons. He announced to his friends that he was coming up, and would take part in the discussion on the 23rd. "But what does he mean to say of the Ministers?" asked Lord Malmesbury of Canning. "He means," answered Canning, "to *fire over the heads* of the Government—that is, not to blame or praise them, but

to support the war measures, and to confine himself to this."

Mr. Pitt did come up accordingly, and took his seat for the first time this Parliament on the 20th. "I have been a long time truant," he said to the Speaker, as they shook hands. There was a general eagerness for his expected speech of the 23rd, not only to learn his line of politics, but because there were nearly two hundred new Members, as Lord Macaulay reckons, who had never heard him.

The debate on the King's Message, and on the Address of the Commons in reply, which began on the 23rd of May, was continued by adjournment on the next day also. Those two days will ever be memorable in our Parliamentary annals for the wonderful speech of Pitt on the former, and the wonderful speech of Fox on the second. It is difficult to decide to which of these two mighty rivals on this occasion the palm of pre-eminence belongs. I have stated in a former passage that the best judges have held this speech of Fox as one of the three greatest that he ever made.[6] If I were asked a similar question as to the three greatest speeches ever made by Pitt, I would in the first place desire to set aside, as in a separate class, his luminous expositions of national finance delivered in successive years, and I would then presume to name his speech on the Fox and North coalition in February 1783, his speech on the Slave Trade in April 1792, and his speech on the renewal of the war in May 1803.

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[6] See vol. ii. p. 142.

With such merits in the estimation of its hearers, it is much to be lamented that nothing, or next to nothing, of this speech is left. By a mistake of the Speaker's the reporters were on that evening shut out from the gallery, so that even the very meagre report which the reporters of that age supplied, at this point altogether fails us. The Parliamentary History contains only a brief outline of the principal heads of argument that Mr. Pitt employed. Nothing then remains for us but to collect and compare the most authentic testimonies that have reached us of this renowned oration.

Lord Malmesbury in his journal gives this account of the debate:—"May 24. Pitt's speech last night, the finest he ever made. Never was any speech so cheered, or such incessant and loud applause. It was strong in support of war, but he was silent as to Ministers, and his silence either as to blame or praise was naturally construed into negative censure. No one was heard after him, and the debate was adjourned at ten o'clock till to-day."

"May 25. Fox spoke three hours last night, very ingenious but very mischievous. Windham answered him. Addington spoke very poorly."

Mr. Abbot, whose journal, like most other journals, sometimes leaves out the corn and takes up the chaff, makes no mention at all of Pitt's great speech. He only tells us—as a thing of far superior interest—that on the 23rd Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York came through his house to hear the debate, and afterwards returned to sup. But of Pitt's great rival he says: "Mr. Fox spoke from ten o'clock till one, and in these

three hours delivered a speech of more art, eloquence, wit, and mischief, than I ever remember to have heard from him."

Fox's own account of this debate will be read with still higher interest. He writes to his nephew on the 6th of June: "Pitt's speech on the former day on the Address was admired very much, and very justly. I think it was the best he ever made in that style. . . . I dare say you have heard puffs enough of my speech on the Address, so that I need not add my mite; but the truth is that it was my best."

The compliment of Fox was not paid in private only. In his own speech he had adverted to that "of a very eminent and powerful Member who has been unable for a long time to give us the benefit of his attendance. It is a speech," he added, "which, if Demosthenes had been present, he must have admired, and might have envied."[7]

These testimonies are already published. But there remains another, more important than all, which has never yet appeared in print. Among the new Members returned at the General Election of 1802 was Mr. John William Ward, only son of Lord Ward, who at a later period became Earl of Dudley, and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Even at this early period he gave proofs of the critical discrimination by which he was afterwards distinguished; and he has described the speeches of Pitt and Fox in writing to his tutor at Oxford, Mr. Copleston, subsequently Bishop of Llandaff. I owe the

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[7] I derive the first sentence from the Parl. Hist. (vol. xxvi. p. 1410), and the second from the Memoirs of Francis Horner (vol. i. p. 221).

communication of this most interesting letter (which Lord Macaulay also saw and has noticed) to the kindness of the present Earl of Dudley.

Hon. J. W. Ward to the Rev. E. Copleston.

"MY DEAR SIR, "May 30, 1803.

". . . . Of the object of your inquiry, Mr. Pitt's speech on the 23rd, I will not say *omne ignotum pro magnifico est*, yet I am perfectly convinced that the circumstance of its not being made public has increased the general disposition to do full justice to its merits. More indeed than full *justice* appears to me to have been done to them, at the expense too of the author, when it has been said, as it has, that this was the greatest, or among the greatest, of his harangues. No doubt it was perfect as far as it went, *i.e.*, as far as it was intended to go. 'Bonaparte absorbing the whole power of France;' 'Egypt consecrated by the heroic blood that had been shed upon it;' 'the *liquid fire* of Jacobinical principles desolating the world;' the merciless sarcasms on the unhappy Erskine, whose speech (remarkable for inextricable confusion both of thought and expression) 'was not, he presumed, designed for a complete and systematic view of the subject,'—'the scruples of whose conscience he was so desirous to dispel,'—'and whose important suffrage he would do so much to obtain'—and the whole of an electrifying peroration on the necessity and magnitude of our future exertions; all this was as fine as anything he ever uttered. Still, however, it is a sacrifice of memory and judgment to present impressions, to pronounce it his *chef-d'œuvre*. It was not so comprehensive, or so various, or, what those who like me had rather hear him for four hours

than one, must be allowed to take into the account, not so long as some to which I have listened, and several at the excellence of which I have guessed through a report. For instance, that against peace in 1800, that for it the following year, that on the murder of the King of France, and that short but beautiful burst of eloquence with which he followed Sheridan (on the same side) on the occasion of the Mutiny.

"But whatever may have been its comparative merits, its effects were astonishing, and, I believe, unequalled. When he came in, which he did not till after Lord Hawkesbury had been speaking nearly an hour, all the attention of the House was withdrawn for some moments from the orator and fixed on him; and as he walked up to his place, his name was repeated aloud by many persons, for want, I imagine, of some other way to express their feelings. Erskine and Whitbread were heard with impatience, and when, at the end of a tedious hour and a-half, he rose (20 min. to 8), there was first a violent and almost universal cry of: Mr. Pitt! Mr. Pitt! He was then cheered before he had uttered a syllable, a mark of approbation which was repeated at almost all the brilliant passages and remarkable sentiments; and when he sat down (9) there followed three of the longest, most eager, and most enthusiastic bursts of applause I ever heard in any place on any occasion. As far as I observed, however, it was confined to the Parliamentary Hear him! Hear him! but it is possible that the exclamations in the body of the House might have hindered me from hearing the clapping of hands in the gallery. This wonderful agitation, you will readily perceive, it would not be fair to ascribe wholly to the superiority of his eloquence *on that particular occasion*—he was applauded before he spoke, which is alone a sufficient proof. Much must be

attributed to his return at such an awful moment to an assembly which he had been accustomed to rule, from which he had been long absent, and in which he had not left a successor; some little perhaps to his addressing a new Parliament in which there were many members by whom he had never or rarely been heard, and whose curiosity must of course have been raised to the highest pitch.

"His physical powers are, I am seriously concerned to remark, perceptibly impaired. He exhibits strong marks of bad health. Though his voice has not lost any of its depth and harmony, his lungs seem to labour in those prodigious sentences which he once thundered forth without effort, and which (to borrow a phrase from your favourite metaphysician Monboddo) other men have 'neither the understanding to form nor the vigour to utter.'

"Fox's speech on the following evening was, I think, a far greater effort of mind. It was much the best I ever heard from *him*, and stands immediately next to the greatest among those of his antagonist. It was free from his usual and lamentable fault of repetition. Every one seemed to agree that he outdid himself. Fortunately it has not shared the fate of Pitt's, though two sides of the *Morning Chronicle* cannot give a very complete idea of this wonderful piece of wit and argument, which took near three hours in delivering. Don't imagine that from this accidental superiority in one instance, I mean to draw any inference as to the comparative talents of the men. I believe it arose merely from the different ground on which circumstances induced them to stand. Pitt taking professedly a very narrow, Fox a very wide field, the genius of the one was circumscribed, the other had room to display all his resources. . . . . .

"Yours most sincerely,

"J. W. WARD."

Among the strangers in the gallery that evening was Mr. William Dacres Adams, who next year became Private Secretary to Mr. Pitt. Turning to his next neighbour he most happily applied to Pitt, on this occasion, some lines from Pope's 'Homer,' which describe the reappearance of Achilles in the field, and which are derived from two separate passages of the poem.

> "Heroes, transported by the well known sound,
> Frequent and full the great assembly crown'd,
> Studious to see that terror of the plain,
> Long lost to battle, shine in arms again.
> Dreadful he stood in front of all his host:
> Pale Troy beheld, and seem'd already lost."

It is to be observed that in these debates the course of the two great orators was by no means the same. Pitt supported the Address. Fox was in favour of an Amendment which Grey had already moved. The main gist of his speech was to palliate on many points, although in guarded terms, the policy of the French Government, and to point out how, with moderation, peace might yet be preserved. In his course, besides his usual small band of followers, he found some unexpected allies. Wilberforce, on the first night, had risen when Pitt sat down. His speech had been faintly heard amidst the buzz of applause and comments which ensued; but he had earnestly argued against the conduct of the Ministers in the late negotiation. Malta, he thought, should have been surrendered in compliance with the letter of the treaty, notwithstanding all the infractions of its spirit. Several other Members concurred in the same view. Yet, combining with Fox's

friends in the division, they mustered only 67, while for the Address there appeared 398. In the Lords a similar Address was carried by 142 against 10.

Three days later, that is on the 27th, Mr. Fox brought forward a motion giving effect to an idea which he had already thrown out. He moved an Address to the King to accept the mediation of Russia. Lord Hawkesbury, in strong terms, expressed the objections of the Government. Then Pitt rose, the third speaker in this debate. He declared himself quite in favour of Fox's scheme. "Whether," he said, "for a season of war or of peace—whether in the view of giving energy to our arms, or security to our repose—whether in the view of preventing war by negotiation, or restoring peace after war has broken out—it is the duty of the Ministers of this country to avail themselves of the good offices of Powers with whom it must be the interest of this country to be united in alliance." The opinion of Pitt gave the debate entirely a new aspect. Lord Hawkesbury assured the House that the Government was ready to accept the mediation of Russia, upon which Mr. Fox consented to withdraw his motion. The comment of Lord Malmesbury is as follows: "This measure is perhaps a right one, though much may be said against it; but it is a Cabinet, not a Parliamentary measure, and Ministers, by suffering it to originate in Parliament, and from the Opposition Bench, betray weakness, and authorize a new and most dangerous precedent."

This desired mediation came to no result. Matters had already gone too far. On the 27th of May, the very day of this debate in the Commons, was issued the

Order of the First Consul to arrest and detain all English subjects travelling in France. Moreover Count Woronzow, the Russian ambassador in England, had no confidence in Mr. Addington. Only a few days later he said in conversation: "*Si ce Ministère dure, la Grande Bretagne ne durera pas.*"

The alienation between Pitt and Addington was at this time complete. A further token of it, as the public thought, appeared on the 1st of June, when a new Writ was moved for Southwark, Mr. Tierney having been appointed Treasurer of the Navy. "This," Lord Malmesbury observes, "seems to be an indication of Pitt never taking office any more,"—office he meant in that administration. It will be remembered that there had been not only political hostility of the keenest kind between Pitt and Tierney, but also a personal encounter.

By this arrangement Addington expected to be able to spare Lord Hawkesbury from the House of Commons, and to summon him by writ to the House of Peers, where, on the Government side, some additional strength was greatly needed.

A question of a party character was now impending. Colonel Peter Patten, member for Newton in Lancashire, had given notice of a Vote of Censure for the 3rd of June. It was to condemn the Ministers for their alleged remissness and want of vigilance previous to the declaration of war. The Ministers would have desired a moderate vote of justification on their conduct; but Pitt, when spoken to, would not hear of such a scheme. "It is throwing down the gauntlet," he said.

But while unable to commend, he was equally unwilling to censure. He deemed it wiser to look forward instead of backward; and he determined, instead of joining in the vote, to move on it the previous question, or the Orders of the Day.

Great efforts were made by some common friends to induce Addington to content himself with such a course; but Addington, with high spirit, steadily refused. When therefore, on the 3rd, Colonel Patten did bring on his motion—when some minor speakers had addressed the House—and when Mr. Thomas Grenville, who followed them, had denounced the Government for two hours in a speech of great ability—the Prime Minister rose next. He conjured the House, in a most earnest tone, to proceed to their final vote of condemnation or acquittal, that Ministers might know whether they were to stand or fall.

Then Pitt rose. He declared that he could not agree to the censure, nor yet would say that the Minister was free from blame. He would not discuss the question itself, but would move to put it by, and proceed to the Orders of the Day. Instead of driving out of office, by a vote, Ministers whom the Crown still honoured with its confidence, and causing a hazardous and probably long interval of suspense with such an enemy before us, he would rather advise the House to devote their whole exertions to the military and financial defence of the country.

On the other hand, others of the Ministry—Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Castlereagh, and the Master of the Rolls, Sir William Grant—all pressed for instant deci-

sion, contending that Mr. Pitt's motion implied the very censure which it professed to avoid. Lord Hawkesbury, who spoke next after Pitt, was especially applauded. "He answered him extraordinarily well," says Fox, "showing both a proper spirit of resistance and a proper spirit at being compelled to use it against an old friend. It was far the best speech he ever made."[8] Mr. Canning rose, as he declared, with feelings of the deepest pain. He must join with Colonel Patten. "For the first time in my life," he said, "I find myself compelled to differ from my Right Hon. friend."

It was a strange jumble of parties, and so the division showed it. The Ministers, the Grenvilles, and the Foxites voted together against the motion of Mr. Pitt, and it was rejected by 333 members against only 56. Upon this Mr. Pitt and most of his friends went out of the House. Mr. Fox rose to declare that on the main question he would not vote either way. He could not approve the conduct of the Ministers, but would take no step for their removal, since he thought that their successors might be less pacific than they. So saying he walked away, followed by Sheridan and his principal friends. Then the Vote of Censure being put, the numbers were as follows:—

Yeas	275
Noes	34

[8] Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, vol. iii. p. 223. To Pitt's speech on this occasion Fox refers in the same letter with considerable acrimony. "Both the substance and manner were as bad as his worst enemy could wish."

In this division Earl Temple and Mr. Canning were the Tellers against the Government. We learn from a confidential letter of Mr. Fox to his nephew, that in taking the course he did he acted directly against his own opinion. Immediately afterwards he went out of town "for good."[9] Grey was gone already.

These large, nay immense, majorities on a great party trial of strength were of course a signal triumph to the Government, and seemed to establish it firmly. To no one did the result afford greater satisfaction than to the King. His note to the Prime Minister next morning shows how completely at this period His Majesty was estranged from Mr. Pitt:—

"June 4, 1803.

"The King feels much pleasure on receiving Mr. Addington's account, that on Mr. Pitt's motion for the Order of the Day the Ayes were but 58 to 335,[1] and on Mr. Patten's motion for a censure, the Ayes were 36, Noes 277; as these events prove the real sense of the House of Commons, and that Parliament truly means support to the Executive Power, not to faction.

"GEORGE R."

The result was, in a party sense, very damaging to Mr. Pitt. The small minority of 54, with the addition of the two Tellers and of Mr. Canning, seemed to measure exactly his Parliamentary strength at this time. Considering his high renown in his seclusion, and the warm applause with which he had been greeted on the

[9] Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, vol. iii. pp. 222 and 224.
[1] The Tellers are here included.

first night of his reappearance, it had been thought that he could carry with him a much greater number in any vote that he might move; but the middle course which he had taken between contending and exasperated parties was, as middle courses are apt to be, distasteful to the House of Commons. We find Fox, in a private letter, descant with natural exultation on the defeat of his ancient rival; and, adverting to Pitt's great effort on the 23rd, Fox adds, "The contrast between the reception of that speech and of his last was perhaps the strongest ever known."[1]

Pitt himself was not chafed. He talked of the matter very calmly to Lord Malmesbury, who called upon him one morning as he sat at breakfast. "Perhaps," he said, "it was not good generalship. I was aware of this, and of the sort of talk and blame to which it would give rise. Yet I had considered it over and over again before I determined what to do. . . . My plan is not to take any retrospective view—to be silent as to all that is past; but not so as to prospective measures. The situation of the country is so serious that over these I must most carefully watch. I will not oppose idly and vexatiously. On the contrary, my general line will be support. But I shall oppose most decidedly, and with all my power, any weak or pernicious half-measures—any unequal to the pressure of the moment."

In the Lords a Vote of Censure, in the same words as by Colonel Patten, had been moved by Earl Fitzwilliam on the 2nd of June. Both Lord Grenville and Lord

[1] To Lord Holland, June 6, 1803.

Carnarvon spoke with energy against the Government. Lord Mulgrave, acting on the views of Mr. Pitt, and declaring that he thought the present time improper for such discussions, moved an adjournment of the House. In this course he was supported by Lord Melville, but they were defeated by 106 votes to 18.

On the 6th of June, and in a less full House, the debate on the main question was renewed; and the Government prevailed by 86 against 17. Thus, in the Peers as in the Commons, the ascendency of Mr. Addington was clearly for the time established.

Of all Pitt's personal adherents, at this time out of office, Mr. Canning, as we have seen, was the only one who persisted in voting with Colonel Patten on the 3rd of June. For some time past, indeed, he had declared against the Ministers open war. For some time past he had given to his satirical temper full rein. Light pieces of poetry, some distinguished by their talent, and all directed against Addington, proceeded from his pen into print. Several of these may deserve to be still remembered. Here is one entitled 'Moderate Men and Moderate Measures.' It thus commences:—

"Praise to placeless proud ability
Let the prudent Muse disclaim;
And sing the statesman—all civility—
Whom moderate talents raise to fame.

. . . . . .

Splendid talents are deceiving,
Tend to counsels much too bold;
Moderate men we prize, believing
All that glitters is not gold."

And then follow some jests, rather too broad, suggested by the nickname of "the Doctor," and applied to the practices of the medical profession.

Here is another—an "Ode to the Doctor" himself. It condemns him above all for the partial favour (but was not Lord Chatham's a still stronger case?) which had led him to promote his brother Mr. Hiley Addington and his brother-in-law Mr. Charles Bragge. He had raised both these gentlemen to the rank of Privy Councillors. He had named the one joint Paymaster of the Forces, and the other Treasurer of the Navy. On the other hand they were expected to strain their lungs in his defence.

"When the faltering periods lag,
Or the House receives them drily,
Cheer, oh cheer him, brother Bragge!
Cheer, oh cheer him, brother Hiley!

Each a gentleman at large,
Lodged and fed at public charge,
Paying, with a grace to charm ye,
This the fleet, and that the army.

Brother Bragge and brother Hiley,
Cheer him! when he speaks so vilely;
Cheer him! when his audience flag,
Brother Hiley, brother Bragge."

Another sally of wit, more doubtfully ascribed to Mr. Canning, was written when block-houses were in progress to fortify the approaches of the Thames.

"If *blocks* can from danger deliver,
Two places are safe from the French:
The one is the mouth of the river,
The other the Treasury Bench."

Best of all, perhaps, is a couplet in which Canning compares the ability of the two Prime Ministers according to a rule-of-three sum.

> "Pitt is to Addington
> As London to Paddington."

It is worth while to note in this year, 1803, the opposite complaints against two statesmen destined to become a few years later the main rivals in the House of Commons. Mr. Canning was justly accused of imprudent and impetuous ardour; while, on the other hand, an icy reserve might be imputed to Lord Castlereagh. "As for my friend Lord Castlereagh, he is so cold that nothing can warm him"—so writes the Marquis Cornwallis.[3] Such is only part of the contrast that might be drawn through life between these two eminent men. Yet in one most amiable feeling, shown in many signal instances, they entirely concurred—in a kindly and affectionate attachment to their friends. It was a feeling that glowed no less beneath the satirical vein of Canning than beneath the stately demeanour of Castlereagh.

Meanwhile the measures of the Session were in active progress. On the 6th of June the Army Estimates came on. Both Pitt and Windham spoke, and nearly to the same effect. Pitt assented to the principle of a new and further levy beyond the regular establishment; at the same time he said care must be taken that the number of Militia should not bear too large a proportion to the whole of our force. A war that should be solely

[3] To General Ross, November 3, 1803.

defensive would be, in his opinion, both dishonourable and ruinous. He urged expedition, and proffered himself as ready to associate with others in sharing the obloquy of harsh measures of defence and finance at such a crisis.[4]

On the 10th there was passed without opposition, and almost without remark, a vote for forty thousand additional seamen. That day also Mr. Pitt saw the outline of the proposed Budget, which Steele communicated to him. He said that the magnitude of the supplies to be raised within the year exceeded his expectations, and fully met his wishes.

On the 13th, accordingly, Addington brought forward his Budget in a speech of two hours. He had that very morning negotiated a loan of twelve millions upon favourable terms. To provide for the further expenses which the large armaments required, he proposed, in the first place, an increase in the duties of excise, to augment the revenue by six millions. Secondly, he asked a renewal of the Property Tax, to be fixed at a lower rate, namely, five per cent., but applied to a wider range, and estimated to produce four millions and a half. Next day, on the Report of the Budget, there was a desultory debate of three hours, but with a general approbation of the plan. Mr. Pitt did not speak. He had strong doubts as to the new plan for the Property Tax, but desired to reserve himself until it should be embodied as a Bill, and clearly brought before the House.

On the 17th there was a Message from the King

[4] For this speech compare the Parliamentary History, vol. xxxvi. p. 1578, with Lord Colchester's Diary, vol. i. p. 427.

announcing the renewal of war with the Batavian Republic; and on the 18th another Message, recommending that a large additional force should be forthwith raised. In pursuance of this last recommendation, Mr. Charles Yorke, as Secretary at War, rose on the 20th to submit his plan relative to the defence of the country. Referring to the promise of a descent on England which the First Consul had lately made to divers bodies of men in France, he dared the enemy to attempt it. They would find the passage of the British Channel far more tremendous than that of the infernal river which the poët had described:

> "Fata obstant, tristisque palus inamabilis undâ
> Alligat, et novies Styx interfusa coercet."

To carry out this classical design Mr. Yorke proposed that an Army of Reserve, consisting of fifty thousand men, should be raised by ballot to serve four years. We have already, he said, seventy-three thousand men in the Militia, and good officers for them are not to be found in sufficient number.

Mr. Windham, who rose next, appears to have been much pleased with the poetical imagery—so nearly in his own style—which Mr. Yorke had used. "Sir," he said, "the Right Hon. Gentleman introduced this measure in a manner perfectly suitable to the solemnity of the occasion. I wish the measure itself had been equally suitable to the manner of its introduction." Windham then proceeded with his usual ingenuity to set forth a great number of objections, and declare his strong preference of regular troops. Yet he was not

always very steady in his views. On a subsequent day he "recommended a Vendean rising *en masse* as a better mode of repelling invasion than the means which the present Bill held forth."[5]

Pitt, on the other hand, gave the measure his full support. He summed up the question as follows: "It appears to me to be essentially necessary that a large force should be raised as speedily as possible; and I do not know any other measure likely to be more effectual for this purpose." Such was also the feeling of the House at large. The Bill was passed rapidly and without any division.

Not so favourable to the Ministers was the course of Mr. Pitt on the 13th of July, when their "Property Duty Bill," as it was called, came to be considered. On that day his sentiments were expressed at considerable length. In the first place he defended his own, the old Income Tax. "It was adopted at a time when the gloom of despondency hung over the minds of the most firm, and when fear and apprehension were to be found among the most loyal. But what were the consequences of this much abused measure? Why, that subsequently to its adoption the spirit of the country, grew up with rapidity and vigour; its triumphs extended, its good fortune as it were revived. As to the Bill now before us, there are many of its provisions of which I strongly disapprove. The modes of disposing of capital should not be interfered with through the operation of a partial tax tending to encourage the application of that capital

[5] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxvi. p. 1623.

to one mode in preference to another. Those modes are various. One man likes to employ his capital in a business which requires great labour, and from which he expects proportionate profits. Another seeks to derive large profits from his capital in great risks. A third chooses to indulge in idleness, and to enjoy a small profit in security. Any attempt to meddle in a legislative measure with this, the usual and spontaneous distribution of property, would be highly unjust, and tend to violate the very character of an Income Tax.

"It is proposed in the Bill before us to make various abatements to persons having annual incomes not exceeding 150*l.*; and all under 60*l.* a-year to be entirely discharged from this tax. From this exemption, however, the landed proprietors and the receivers of interest from the Funds are excluded. I cannot conceive the grounds upon which this exclusion rests. Certainly, as regards the Funds, it is a breach of the principle upon which loans have been contracted, and what effects such an innovation is likely to have upon any future loan I will not pretend to say. . . . . , Why should persons of humble revenue in the Funds and in land be made the sacrifices of this singular difference, while those of superior revenue are left quite untouched? . . . . But, above all, I deprecate the proposed regulation as inconsistent with national good faith, and as calculated to strike the first blow against that credit for which the country has been so long distinguished."

In pursuance of the opinion thus wisely deduced from sound first principles Pitt moved an Instruction to the

Committee that the proposed exemptions and abatements should apply to all classes of property alike.

Some doubts were expressed as to the form of the Instruction. Pitt cited a precedent in point, which Rose had suggested to him from the Journals of the year 1721, and the question was debated both on the form and on the substance. According to the Speaker's account, "words of considerable asperity, or rather language in a tone of great asperity, passed from Mr. Pitt towards Mr. Addington in these discussions."[6] Addington stoutly defended his own proposal, and in the division he prevailed by a large majority. For Pitt's motion there were but 50 votes, and against it 150.

But see here the inborn ascendency of genius. Addington, although he had conquered in the division, felt himself beat in the debate. He could not venture to let his Bill go forth to the country with such arguments and such authority against it. On the very next day, the 14th of July, he came down to the House to renounce his victory, to disavow his followers, and to make those very alterations which Pitt had pressed.

Who, it might be asked, was at this juncture the real and effective Minister of England? The triumph to Pitt was perhaps even greater than that of the 23rd of May.

On the 18th the Commons had before them another measure for the public defence. It was called the Military Service Bill, and introduced by Mr. Yorke.

[6] Diary of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 432.

The object was to bring into form and shape the great national movement, now in progress, of the Volunteers. With this view the Bill gave powers for the enrolment and assembling of all men between the ages of seventeen and fifty-five, who were capable of serving; and for their being exercised and drilled. It was a good measure as far as it went, but it did not go very far. Some months later, in private conversation, Pitt spoke of it as "a flimsy Bill."[7] At the time, however, he declared his intention to support it. So did Windham. So did also Fox, who came up on purpose from St. Ann's. But all three charged the Ministers with inexcusable delay in not bringing it forward sooner.

The sole demur, if demur it were, to the measure, came from Sir Francis Burdett. He said that the only way to give spirit and energy to the people, and to make the country worth defending, was to repeal every Act passed since the accession of the present King!

In the Committee, however, some doubts arose. There was a clause which provided for exercising the Volunteers on Sundays after service; and against this clause Wilberforce loudly protested. He tells us, in his Diary, that "Pitt spoke of it as not contrary to English Church principles." Finally, there was some modification, but no withdrawal, of the clause; or, in Wilberforce's words, "we got the Bill mended, though not cured."

On a subsequent day, Colonel Craufurd having

[7] Conversation with Lord Malmesbury, February 19, 1804.

pressed for a more extensive measure of defence, Mr. Pitt spoke at length in approbation of that idea. And here again I may quote from Wilberforce's Diary. "Pitt supported Craufurd, and discovered great military genius. His speech capital—urging precautions, and yet animating."

It was in this speech that Pitt declared himself as clearly in favour of defensive works for London. "But we are told," he said, "that we ought not to fortify London because our ancestors did not fortify it. Why, Sir, that is no argument, unless you can show me that our ancestors were in the same situation that we are. We might as well be told that, because our ancestors fought with arrows and with lances, we ought to use them now; and that we ought to consider shields and corselets as affording a secure defence against musketry and artillery. If the fortification of the capital can add to the security of the country, I think it ought to be done. If, by the erection of works such as I am recommending, you can delay the progress of the enemy for three days, it may make the difference between the safety and the destruction of the capital. It will not, I admit, make a difference between the conquest and the independence of the country, for that will not depend upon one nor upon ten battles; but it may make the difference between the loss of thousands of lives, with misery, havoc, and desolation spread over the country on one hand—or, on the other, of frustrating the efforts, of confounding the exertions, and of chastising the insolence of the enemy."

In another production of Wilberforce—a letter to his

friend in Dorsetshire—we find the course of public business at this period well described.

Mr. Wilberforce to Mr. Bankes.

"MY DEAR BANKES, "London, Aug. 11, 1803.

. . . . . .

"I forget exactly when you left London, but I think it was just about the time of the Income Tax Bill. We got through it much in the same way as through many of a similar sort; and the same rapid manufacture of clauses, which had done such honour to the industry of our friend Rose, was seen to proceed with equal celerity in the hands of his successor Vansittart. To be sure, when one sees how Acts of Parliament are made, one almost wonders they are half as correct, or rather incorrect, as they are.

"The Army of Reserve Bill passed. Pitt attended constantly; in the main behaving well, but once, I understand, when I did not happen to be present, saying something towards Addington which indicated ill-nature and contempt. It was when Addington declared against taxing the future foreign purchasers of funded property, because it would abridge the market, and thereby depreciate the commodity to the old stockholders, when Pitt congratulated him, in the House, on the supererogatory tenderness for the public faith which he so suddenly displayed. Pitt had been, however, before so far reconciled, that though I think he never called Addington, individually, his Honourable friend, he did the Ministers in general; and Addington called him so frequently. Pitt communicated freely with Yorke, and showed him his plan for the levy *en masse*, pressing forward strongly the introduction of the scheme, and secretly grumbling at the dilatoriness of Ministry. At

length he declared to me and others, that if Government would not move it, he himself would. Yorke then gave notice of it, and it has gone through, as you see.

"I must be very short in what remains, and I am sorry for it, because all I have yet said is not worth your reading. But from my having various matters of business to settle with the different offices, I have been much among the Ministers; and I am grieved to say that their weakness is lamentable. There is no man who takes such a decided lead as to command the movements of the different parts of the machine; and the consequence is, that the country is now, on the 11th of August, utterly unprepared for the enemy, if he should be more timely in his preparations. Government have not expressed their meaning with any distinctness to the Lord Lieutenants. . . . . In several other places no answers have been received to most liberal offers of Volunteer service; or there has been such delay, that the Volunteers have been tired with waiting, have been tampered with, and have withdrawn their offer. . . . . Sheridan fights lustily for Addington. He proposed a sufficiently absurd vote of thanks last night to the Volunteers who had so gallantly offered their services; but you see clearly that the affectionate regard of Government to him knows no bounds in this honeymoon of their union.

"Ever yours sincerely,

"W. WILBERFORCE."

Another, and though less detailed, not less interesting account of our politics at this time, is comprised in a confidential letter which Lord Grenville addressed to the Governor General of India. In this letter, which bears date July 12, 1803, Grenville observes: "It gives

me great pleasure to see that, while my difference with Addington becomes every day more marked, all the motives which made Pitt and me differ in opinion and conduct daily decrease. We have not, however, yet been able to assimilate completely our plans of political conduct. Our situation, indeed, in one essential point of view, is entirely different. Though he did not recommend Addington to his present employment (and, indeed, who is there that knows him would have done it?), he nevertheless gave him a certain portion of influence, more active than my opinion would have permitted me to grant, in the formation of the new administration. He advised their measures a long time after I had ceased to have any intercourse with them. . . . . If he has written to you (which he certainly must have done, had he not contracted the bad habit of never writing to any one), he must have expressed to you, I am persuaded, all these sentiments without reserve."

The fate of this letter was certainly strange. On its way to Lord Wellesley the ship which bore it, the "Admiral Aplin," was captured by the French in the Indian seas. With some other private correspondence it was then, by order of the Government of France, translated and published in the *Moniteur* at a later period, the 16th of September, 1804. Thence it was, under the disadvantage, of course, of a double translation, reproduced in the English newspapers.[8] Lord

[8] It will be found at full length in the Annual Register for 1804, p. 116. See also Adolphus's History, vol. vii. p. 754.

Grenville had thus the mortification to find his confidential statements to a personal friend prematurely, and without his consent, given forth to the world. My father told me that he chanced to be with Mr. Pitt when this publication took place, and on their coming to the passage where the "bad habit of never writing" is referred to, Mr. Pitt said drily, "I think Grenville will now acknowledge that I was in the right of it!"

The Session was still in progress, and the month of July had not yet passed, when there came what Lord Grenville, in another letter, truly calls "dreadful news from Ireland." A new conspiracy had been planned; a new murder had been perpetrated. The prime mover of the first was a Protestant gentleman of Dublin, Robert Emmett; his father a physician in much practice; himself a young man of great ability. His elder brother, Thomas Addis Emmett, had been forward among the Irish leaders of "the '98," and subsequently had been no less forward among the Irish exiles. With most of these, as also with several friends in the Government of France, Robert Emmett held frequent conference at Paris and at Brussels through the whole of 1801. Returning to Dublin towards the close of the next year, he applied himself to knit together once again the broken meshes of rebellion. The renewal of the war between England and France was an event of course highly favourable to his views. By him and by his brother chiefs proclamations were composed; arms and ammunition were purchased. It was intended to muster some armed bands, and to make an attack on

three principal points—the Pigeon-House, the Castle, and the Artillery Barracks at Island Bridge.[9]

The plot was still in progress, when, on the 16th of July, there ensued the accidental explosion of a gunpowder magazine which they had formed in Patrick Street. The alarm which this produced, and the chance of some consequent disclosures, impelled the conspirators prematurely into action. They fixed the rising of the people in Dublin for the evening of Saturday the 23rd. Some secret intelligence did reach the Government early that same afternoon, but no prompt measures were adopted. It was natural that subsequently the Government should be charged as having shown neither vigilance nor vigour. A great deal of recrimination followed between the Earl of Hardwicke, Lord Lieutenant, and General Fox, brother of the celebrated statesman, who was at this time Commander of the Forces in Ireland.

Through the whole afternoon small parties of men were observed to come in from Palmerstown and other places, and to gather in the neighbourhood of Thomas Street, close to which was one of the secret *depôts* of arms. By nine o'clock in the evening there might be four hundred assembled. Pikes and a few blunderbusses were then distributed among them from the *depôt;* and some of the leaders appearing, urged them to proceed at once to attack the Castle. For so bold a step they were not, it seems, fully prepared. Instead of keeping

[9] See Emmett's own account, first published by Mr. Curran, and inserted in Howell's State Trials, vol. xxviii. p. 1178.

in one main body, they fell again into separate parties. One of these unhappily met the coach of Lord Kilwarden, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, who had been at his country seat, five miles from Dublin, and was returning in all haste, having been apprised by express of the threatening appearances. In the carriage with him were his daughter and his nephew, the Rev. Arthur Wolfe. The venerable Judge was dragged out, and, in spite of his cries for mercy, was inhumanly butchered with pikes. His mangled body bore the trace of no less than thirty wounds. His nephew, who had already escaped to some distance, was met by another party and killed in the same manner. To Miss Wolfe, on the contrary, a touch of compassion was shown. She was protected from harm, it is said, by two of the rebel chiefs on horseback; and through their interposition made her way to the Castle, where she was almost the first to bring the tidings of her father's fall.

After these and some other deeds of blood, several of the insurgent bands formed themselves again into one mass, and collected in High Street with the apparent intention of attacking the Castle. By this time, however, the military were in motion. Parties of soldiers and policemen advanced against the rebels, and, after some volleys, entirely dispersed them. In their retreat they were enabled to carry off their dead and wounded; but their leaders now concealed themselves or fled, and no attempt was made to renew the insurrection. By the vigilant search of the police on the next ensuing days, the secret *depôts* of arms were brought to light. In one alone there were several thousand heads of pikes. There

were machines made of planks and set with spikes—a favour designed for the feet of the cavalry horses. There were also magnificent uniforms in green and gold for the Generals——that were to be.

No sooner did the events of the 23rd at Dublin become known to the Government in England than a Message from the King upon them was sent down to both Houses. Addresses in reply were unanimously voted. Then the Prime Minister rose to bring in a Bill enabling the Lord Lieutenant to try at once, by Court Martial, all persons taken in rebellion, and to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. The operation of the Act was limited to six weeks after the commencement of the next Session of Parliament, and it was pressed through all its stages with the utmost despatch.

Shortly afterwards Major Sirr, the same officer so active in the arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, discovered Robert Emmett in a hiding-place in the county of Wicklow, and carried him back to Dublin. Emmett delivered an eloquent speech upon his trial, but could make no effectual defence, and met his fate with unshaken constancy and courage. Nineteen other prisoners who had taken part in the Dublin insurrection were brought to trial in the months of August and September. One was acquitted, and one was pardoned; the rest, like Emmett, underwent the extreme sentence of the law.

At nearly the close of these trials, we find them summed up as follows by Mr. Wickham, the Secretary for Ireland, in writing to the Speaker, who was his intimate friend:—"So much for our civil proceedings,

which will ensure the peace of the country, if the French do not come. But if they do, and in force, God help us! Be assured we are not prepared to meet them. Do not cite me for this opinion; I have given it over and over again in the strongest manner *à qui de droit.*"[1]

From the exigency of public business, the Session of Parliament had been prolonged to a date most unusual at that period. Not until the 12th of August did the King close it by a Speech from the Throne. "It is painful to me," said His Majesty, "to reflect that the means of necessary exertion cannot be provided without a heavy pressure upon my faithful people."

[1] Letter dated Dublin Castle, Sept. 22, 1803, and appended to the Colchester Diary.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

1803.

Occupation of Hanover by the French — Preparations of the First Consul for invading England — M. Thiers's account of the terror inspired by them — The Volunteers — Pitt's Cinque Port Regiment — State of his health — Reminiscences of his conversation — Lady Hester Stanhope — Pitt's tour of inspection — Controversy carried on in pamphlets — Conduct of Government respecting the defence of the country — Pitt's gun-boats — Grand Volunteer Reviews in Hyde Park — Ministerial changes, and Parliamentary recruits — Pitt's Speech on the Volunteers — Volunteer Exemption Bill — State of the Navy.

ON the renewal of the war between France and England, the First Consul, without an hour's delay, turned his whole mind to the vigorous prosecution of the contest. He would not allow, as the German Princes claimed, that the Electorate of Hanover, as part of their "Holy Roman Empire," should maintain its convenient neutrality. On the contrary, he sent a force of twenty-five thousand men under General Mortier, not only to reduce as was easy, but to hold and occupy that country. He drew large revenues from the dependent Republic of Italy. He imposed a monthly subsidy on the scarcely less dependent Kingdom of Spain. He devoted to his warlike preparations the sum of fifty-four millions of francs, which he had received in ready money from the United States, as part price for the province of Louisiana, which he had ceded to them. And above all he ap-

pealed—and who ever appealed in vain?—to the military ardour of the *Ancienne France.*

The scheme upon which all the energies of the First Consul seemed at this time to be centred was an invasion of England on the most gigantic scale. The camp along the heights of Boulogne was sometimes animated by his presence, and constantly directed by his genius. There a hundred thousand men, all excellent troops, were arrayed in sight of the English shores. Fifty thousand more, equally prepared for action, were spread over the coast of France, old and new, from Brest to Antwerp. There were the men who had contended with the Mamalukes at the foot of the Pyramids, or with the Russians along the passes of the Alps. There were the recent victors of Marengo, and the coming victors of Austerlitz. A small part of this vast force, to be embarked in the fleet at Brest, was designed for Ireland; but by far the greater number were to muster at Boulogne, and to make straight for the shores before them. London was to be their aim, and the First Consul himself would be their leader.

The principal difficulty was of course the passage of the Channel. A far superior British fleet would, it was taken for granted, ride the sea; but there were states of wind and tide when small light vessels, with the aid of oars, might slip past unmolested by the men-of-war. With this view there was devised a system of flat-bottomed boats for the transport of troops. Other boats of a different kind would serve for horses and artillery. It was calculated that to convey so vast an armament, even two thousand boats would not suffice; but the

plans for them being once approved, their construction was immediately begun. It was hoped that by the close of autumn they might be completed and ready for the enterprise.

Of the boats thus put in requisition, about one thousand were to be constructed in the neighbouring ports, and then to be brought round to the central station; but more than twelve hundred were in progress at the central station itself. There the clangour of the ship-builders in never-ceasing activity mingled with the measured tread or the martial music of the soldiers. Even Xerxes, from the coast of Attica, did not in truth gaze on so mighty an armament as Napoleon might then contemplate from the cliffs of Boulogne.

> "A king sate on the rocky brow
> That looks o'er sea-born Salamis,
> And ships by thousands lay below,
> And men in nations—all were his!"

A full account of these enormous preparations has been given by an eloquent and able historian of our own day—Monsieur Thiers. He goes on to say that at the first tidings of them in their entire magnitude a shuddering affright—*un frisson de terreur*—ran through every rank in England—*dans toutes les classes de la nation.*[1] I know not on what testimonies M. Thiers has here relied. For my own part I have discovered none in support of this *frisson de terreur*. So far as I have seen them, the most trustworthy records point to a very

[1] Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. iv. p. 504. M. Thiers adds, however, "*Ce n'était pas là une preuve de manque de courage.*"

different conclusion. They represent the English people as not rashly undervaluing either the genius or the resources of the great chief opposed to them, but as steadily determined, by all human efforts, to meet and overcome them. Not merely, as I have shown in an earlier passage, were all the votes for national defence most cheerfully accorded by the representatives of the people in Parliament. Not merely was the navy resolved, if any exertions could achieve it, to repel the invaders in mid-sea. Not merely was the army resolved to confront them, if it must be so, on our native shores. But chiefly and above all, there arose in 1803, as in 1860, the indomitable spirit of the Volunteers. Men of all ranks or creeds or classes pressed forward, eager to have arms and be enrolled. We may indeed say of both periods, as Sir Walter Scott has well said of the former, that "it is remarkable how the good sense and firmness of the people supplied almost all deficiencies of inexperience." Those men who were unable to serve in person were most willing to contribute in purse. Nowhere, perhaps, is there a more striking description of that strong and fervid impulse than is drawn by the same admirable master of fiction, who here, however, is dealing with no fiction, but with a national movement which he saw and which he shared. In his novel of 'The Antiquary' he relates how Bailie Littlejohn of Fairport and his brother magistrates were beset by the quartermasters of the different corps for billets for their men and horses. "Let us," said the Bailie, "take the horses into our warehouses, and the men into our parlours—share our supper with the one, and our forage

with the other. We have made ourselves wealthy under a free and paternal government, and now is the time to show we know its value."

In July, 1803, as I have already related, the Government brought in a measure, scarcely adequate to the emergency, for the regulation of the Volunteers. A Circular Letter from Lord Hobart to the Lords Lieutenant, tending to discourage, and even in some cases to reject, their offers, gave them much offence; but their energy and spirit rose superior to all Ministerial defects. Even before the close of summer it was calculated that upwards of three hundred thousand had been accepted and enrolled.[2]

Of those who did good service at this trying period, Mr. Pitt was among the foremost. The course which he took will best appear from a letter which the Secretary of State addressed to him:—

Lord Hobart to Mr. Pitt.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Downing Street, Aug. 3, 1803.

"I must request of you to have the goodness to send me officially the offer for raising a corps of Volunteers within the Cinque Ports, of which you proposed to take the command, dated upon the day on which you privately made the communication to me, as there will in that case be no difficulty in my signifying His Majesty's acceptance of it upon the terms contained in the enclosed papers; and in order to save time, it would be

[2] This is the number stated by Addington himself in writing to his brother, August 30, 1803. See his Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 226.

advisable that you should specify, in the first instance, the number of which you propose that the corps should consist, and the names of the officers.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"HOBART."

Mr. Pitt did write accordingly in full detail, dating his communication on the day of his verbal offer—namely, July 27, 1803. That letter is now preserved in the State Paper Office.[3]

On his return to Walmer Castle, when the Session had closed, Pitt applied himself at once to carry out his scheme. By great activity and energy he had very soon on foot an excellent regiment of Volunteers, divided into three battalions, and numbering three thousand men. He was constantly seen on horseback, and in full Volunteer uniform as the Colonel in chief, exercising and reviewing his men. It was acknowledged on all hands, that as, from the circumstances of the coast, Pitt held the post of principal danger, so he set the most conspicuous example of zeal for the national defence. "Pitt is doing great things as Lord Warden," writes Wilberforce to Muncaster. Even the caustic Peter Pindar, until then his most constant detractor, was moved to some words that may almost amount to praise:—

"Come the Consul whenever he will—
And he means it when Neptune is calmer—
Pitt will send him a d—— bitter pill
From his fortress the Castle of Walmer!"[4]

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[3] It will be found in vol. vii. of the class 'Internal Defence,' 1803. In June, 1861, a copy was sent me by Lord Herbert of Lea.

[4] Peter Pindar's Works, vol. v. p. 188, ed. 1812.

A pleasantry of Pitt at this time has been preserved by tradition. It seems that one battalion which he was forming, or in the formation of which he was consulted, did not show the same readiness as distinguished the rest. Their draft Rules which they sent to Pitt were full of cautions and reserves. The words "except in the case of actual invasion" were constantly occurring. At length came a clause that at no time, and on no account whatever, were they to be sent out of the country. Pitt here lost patience, and taking up his pen, he wrote opposite to that clause in the draft the same words as he had read in the preceding, "except in the case of actual invasion!"

Notwithstanding the great energy and activity which Mr. Pitt evinced in forming his Cinque Port Volunteers, there is no doubt that his strength of constitution was at this time not a little impaired. So it had been for several years, most probably ever since his great illness in 1797. One main sign of this was the change in his morning hours, which I have elsewhere related. To the same cause we may ascribe his growing disinclination to employ himself in private correspondence. Pitt, in his letter to my father of March, 1803, alludes to this himself in a good humoured strain. Lord Grenville, in a letter to Lord Wellesley of July, 1803, says of Pitt, as we have seen, that he had "contracted the bad habit of never writing to any one." That this was a great exaggeration is clear, even from the numerous insertions in my present volume. But it is not to be denied that at this time, and subsequently to the close of his life, Mr. Pitt often delayed his answers to

merely private letters, and sometimes failed to answer them at all.

At this period my father, through the constant kindness of Mr. Pitt, was frequently his guest, both at Walmer Castle and in town. Many years afterwards, by the aid of an excellent memory, he put on paper a few reminiscences of his great kinsman. Some of these, not already made use of in the course of my narrative, may perhaps at this place be most conveniently inserted.

Reminiscences of Mr. Pitt.

"He was a most agreeable and amiable as well as a most interesting companion, and had a vast fund of anecdotes, which he narrated admirably, and with much power of mimicry. His conversation was very lively and cheerful, and he preferred it to that of a graver character, for which reason the friends with whom he liked most to associate were those who had a similar disposition. Amongst their number were Charles Long (afterwards Lord Farnborough), J. C. Villiers (afterwards Lord Clarendon), General Phipps, Sir Alexander Hope, and Ferguson of Pitfour, who was often the subject of his good humoured raillery."

Interrupting for a moment the course of these short Reminiscences, I would remark that Ferguson of Pitfour was, in his day, a well-known humorist, and often figured in Lord Sidmouth's stories. Here is one which Dean Pellew has preserved. One day Ferguson with several other Members was dining in the coffee-room of

the House of Commons, when some one ran in to tell them that Mr. Pitt was on his legs. Every one prepared to leave the table except Ferguson, who remained quietly seated. "What!" said they, "won't you go to hear Mr. Pitt?"—"No," he replied; "why should I? Do you think Mr. Pitt would go to hear me?"—"But indeed I would," said Mr. Pitt, when the circumstance was related to him.[5]

Reminiscences of Mr. Pitt continued.

"He thought Abbadie's work on the Christian Religion[6] was the best he had read on that subject.

"He said with respect to the public letters of Lord Bolingbroke, which were published in two 4to. volumes, 'They convey to me a much higher opinion of his political talents than any of his other works.'

"Gil Blas he considered the best of all novels.

"My father had asked Lord Chatham to what circumstance he ascribed his successes in the Seven Years' War? to which the other very modestly replied, 'To my obtaining accurate information respecting the places which I intended to attack.' I mentioned this to Mr. Pitt, who said, 'Whatever may have been the case in my

[5] Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. i. p. 153.

[6] The work here referred to—*Traité de la Vérité de la Religion Chrétienne*—is comprised in two volumes, and first appeared at Rotterdam in 1684. A Roman Catholic theologian, the Abbé Houteville (as cited in the *Biographia Britannica*), says of it:—"Of all the treatises in defence of the Christian Faith which have been published by Protestants, the most eminent is that written by M. Abbadie."

father's time, I found it very difficult to acquire such information.'

"It was said of Lord Chatham's eloquence by Mr. Pitt, in conversing with me, 'There was much light and shade in my father's speeches;' and he added, 'they were very incorrectly reported.'

"Mr. Pitt said to me of Lord Buckingham that he had 'the condescension of pride.'"

It was, I believe, in the course of this month of August that Mr. Pitt made a great alteration in his household. Lady Hester Stanhope on her return from the Continent with Mr. and Mrs. Egerton found her grandmother at Burton Pynsent no more. Estranged as she had been from her father, she was then at a loss for a home. Of her two uncles, Lord Chatham, since the death of the Dowager Countess, had taken the charge of another and an orphan niece, Miss Eliot. There remained to Lady Hester only the hope of Mr. Pitt. But the hope founded on his generous temper was at once fulfilled. He welcomed his niece to his house as her permanent abode. Henceforth she sat at the head of his table, and assisted him in doing the honours to his guests.

At this time Major-General Edmund Phipps was a visitor for some days at Walmer Castle, and he announced the event amongst other news in writing to his brother, Lord Mulgrave. We find Lord Mulgrave remark in reply: "How amiable it is of Pitt to take compassion on poor Lady Hester Stanhope, and that in a

way which must break in upon his habits of life! He is as good as he is great."[7]

There is no doubt, as Lord Mulgrave here implies, that confirmed as Mr. Pitt was now in what may be called old-bachelor habits, he cannot have taken this step without some misgiving. He must have felt that he might be sacrificing or greatly hazarding his future comfort for the sake of a niece whom, up to that time, he had very seldom seen. But I rejoice to think that his kind act—as by a propitious order of things is often the case with such acts—brought after it its own reward. Lady Hester quickly formed for him a strong and devoted attachment, which she extended to his memory so long as her own life endured. On his part he came to regard her with almost a father's affection.

In her latter years Lady Hester Stanhope has been frequently described. Travellers in Palestine all sought to visit the recluse of Mount Lebanon. Many failed in gaining access to the "castled crag" where she dwelt alone, and have indulged their spleen in bitter comments on one whom they never saw. Others who succeeded have portrayed, and, perhaps, as I may deem, exaggerated, the violence of her temper and the eccentricity of her opinions. But not such was the Hester Stanhope who, at the age of twenty-seven, became the inmate of her uncle's house. With considerable personal attractions the Lady Hester of 1803 combined a lively

[7] Letter dated York, Sept. 3, 1803, and published in Phipps's Memoirs of Mr. Robert Plumer Ward, vol. i. p. 143, ed. 1850.

flow of conversation, and an inborn quickness of discernment. Her wit was certainly even then far too satirical, and too little under control. She made even then many enemies, but she also made many friends. Mr. Pitt was on some occasions much discomposed by her sprightly sallies, which did not always spare his own Cabinet colleagues. But on the whole her young presence proved to be, as it were, a light in his dwelling. It gave it that charm which only a female presence can impart. It tended, as I believe, far more than his return to power, to cheer and brighten his few—too few—remaining years.

I have said that her wit was too unrestrained, and that it did not always spare Mr. Pitt's most intimate friends. Of this I will give only one instance, which I heard from Mr. Pitt's last surviving Private Secretary. It refers to the Lord Mulgrave from one of whose letters I just now cited a sentence. Sixteen months from the date of that letter Lord Mulgrave was named by Mr. Pitt Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a post which, as some persons thought, would overtask his mental powers. Shortly afterwards Lord Mulgrave came one morning to breakfast with Mr. Pitt, and desiring to eat an egg, could find on the table only a broken egg-spoon. "How can Pitt have such a spoon as this?" he asked of Lady Hester. "Don't you know," answered the lively lady, "have you not yet discovered that Mr. Pitt sometimes uses very slight and weak instruments to effect his ends?"

In the beginning of September Mr. Pitt proceeded on a tour of inspection through the Cinque Ports, ac-

companied by Major-General Phipps. He examined with care the divers fortifications and harbours, and directed the most effectual measures for national defence. Thus, in his hands and under the circumstances of the time, did the ancient office of Lord Warden resume its lustre and its powers. Moreover at every interval of leisure Pitt was out with his Volunteers. On them and on him, as they all felt, would devolve, if the French landed, the honourable duty of striking the first blow. "I am uneasy at it," writes Wilberforce to a friend. "He does not engage on equal or common terms, and his spirit will lead him to be foremost in the battle. Yet, as it is his proper part, one can say nothing against it."

On the return of Mr. Pitt to Walmer Castle, he had to consider a point in politics. A paper war was begun against him by some friends of the Ministry. A pamphlet had come forth entitled "Cursory Remarks upon the State of Parties by a Near Observer." That publication was no doubt made so far back as the commencement of August, since we find it mentioned by Mr. Wilberforce on the 11th.[8] But it does not seem to have attracted much attention until the commencement of the ensuing month. At that time, indeed, it was, as I presume, new-modelled, since its Dedication bears the date September 5, 1803. Lord Mulgrave, writing on the 9th, says that he has only just received it.[9] Written as it was with much ability, and proceeding, as was

[8] Life, by his Sons, vol. iii. p. 119.

[9] Phipps's Memoirs of Ward, vol. i. p. 137.

whispered, from men in power, it very soon attained a considerable circulation. Of two copies which I have seen at the British Museum, one is of the ninth edition.

The whole tone of this pamphlet is of extreme asperity to Mr. Pitt. It denounces him for two opposite faults—for timidity in his retirement from office, and for arrogance in the negotiations designed to bring him back to it. On the other hand, Mr. Addington is extolled as a perfect or nearly perfect statesman. But the tendency of the "Near Observer" is sufficiently shown in a single sentence, the only one that need here be quoted. "I confess," he says, "that I look upon the attachment and deference of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for Mr. Pitt as a weakness—the only one I have discovered in his character."

In this pamphlet, the recent negotiations between Pitt and Addington, though garbled and misstated, were referred to with such circumstances of detail as to betoken an author acquainted with the real facts. "It is evidently written by some confidential man," says Wilberforce. Mr. Long positively ascertained that copies of it had been sent to several persons by Mr. Vansittart, Secretary of the Treasury.[1] It was natural to conclude, as did Pitt and all Pitt's friends at this juncture, that Addington was in truth at the bottom of the whole.

In truth, however, Addington had not been consulted. Subsequently, on several occasions, he declared his

[1] See a note to Rose's Diaries, vol. ii. p. 62.

entire ignorance of this production until after it was published.[2] Nor is there the least reason to doubt his word. Friends, and even relatives, had acted for him without his knowledge. The pamphlet had been written by a Mr. Bentley, to whom the facts were supplied by Mr. Bragge.

With such misstatements of his conduct before him, and, above all, with such suspicions of the source from which these misstatements had sprung, Mr. Pitt was of course very much incensed. So were, likewise, all his friends. But Pitt's own feelings will best appear from a letter which he wrote at this time.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Castlereagh.

"Walmer Castle, Sept. 21, 1803.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I received last week your letter from Colchester, and, at the same time, the papers which you had directed to be sent me from London, respecting the important question in discussion between your Board and the Court of Directors. I should always feel a sincere pleasure in being able to comply with any wish of yours; and as far as you are immediately concerned, could have no hesitation in giving you the best opinion in my power on any point on which you could be desirous of receiving it; but the decision on this question must, I conceive, necessarily be considered as a measure of the Government; and in the situation in which I stand, especially after the injurious and offensive line which has been recently adopted towards me, apparently with the countenance at least of a leading

[2] Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 147.

part of that Government, I must feel it impossible to hold any private communication on any political subject even with those of its members to whom individually I am most disposed to retain every sentiment of kindness and regard. I am sure I need not apologise to you for having frankly assigned my reasons for requesting to return the papers without any observation; and if you happen to have seen a publication which has made its appearance since the close of the Session, and has been circulated with uncommon industry, you will not be at a loss to know what it is to which I particularly refer. Believe me, my dear Lord, with every personal good wish,

"Faithfully and sincerely yours,

"W. PITT."

To this letter no reply was for a long time returned.

Lord Chatham was at Walmer Castle on a visit subsequently to the publication of the offensive pamphlet. But he never mentioned it to Mr. Pitt, nor did Mr. Pitt to him. The second Earl of that great name was well content, as it seems to me, both then and afterwards, placidly to float along with his friends in office. After the failure of Addington's overtures, there was little of political communication between the two brothers. I have found among their manuscripts no letter of Mr. Pitt to Lord Chatham from May, 1803, to the close of the following year.

Mr. Pitt had, however, an early opportunity of consulting with some friends far more zealous for his fame than his brother appeared to be. He had to go to town on some business of the Trinity House. On the 2nd of October he arrived in the morning, having slept the

night before at Lord Darnley's beautiful seat, Cobham Park. He went at once to see Rose in Palace Yard, where, next day, he also met Long. All three agreed that there ought to be an answer to the pamphlet. The question was only to whom the task should be committed. Several names were talked of. At last was suggested Mr. Thomas Peregrine Courtenay, son of the late Bishop of Exeter. Still a very young man, he was a Clerk in the Stationery Office, and had recently published a sensible essay on finance. It was decided that Mr. Courtenay should be asked to undertake the answer from the notes of Long, and under the superintendence of Pitt.

On this footing then was the counter-pamphlet written, and a few weeks afterwards sent forth. It was entitled, "Plain Answer to the Misrepresentations and Calumnies contained in the Cursory Remarks of a Near Observer. By a More Accurate Observer." Though exciting much interest at the time, and going through several editions, this pamphlet is at present very scarce. I have seen a copy of it at the British Museum, and found it to contain a clear and temperate reply to the various points alleged.

Of these points there is one, and one only, that I desire to produce at length, because it seems to me to settle decisively, and once for all, the extent of the engagement made by the retiring Minister in February, 1801. The "Near Observer" had asserted that there was "the promise given and withdrawn, on the part of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, of constant, zealous, and active support of the present administration."

To this the "More Accurate Observer," with authority from Walmer Castle, replies as follows:—

"Mr. Pitt undoubtedly, when he retired from office, felt convinced that, under the circumstances of the period, His Majesty had selected for his advisers persons by whom it was probable that the government of the country would be wisely and safely administered. He felt them, therefore, entitled to his support, and, as well as Lord Grenville, gave them his assurance of it. To give to any set of men a promise of constant support, *let their conduct be what it would,* is as inconsistent with every idea of public duty as it certainly is with common sense or common honesty. Neither Mr. Pitt nor Lord Grenville ever gave, nor did Mr. Addington ever understand that he had received, such a promise."

The pamphlet was by no means the only question discussed between the friends in Palace Yard, as the following extract from Rose's Diary will best show:—

"We next talked of the conduct of Government respecting the defence of the country, which appears daily to be more and more incomprehensible. Mr. Pitt told me that very early after his arrival in the country he had an offer from the people of Deal of fifty gunboats, which he immediately communicated to Government, and it was accepted. Convinced of the great utility of such a defence, he obtained from some other places an offer of fifty more; but before he was regularly authorized to communicate that to the administration, he received a private letter from Lord Hobart, requesting him to get more boats if he could. Of course

he replied to his Lordship that he had anticipated his wish to the extent above mentioned, and, at the same time, wrote to the Admiralty to beg that they would order the second set to be fitted; to which he received for answer from their Lordships, that Lord Hobart was taking other measures for obtaining gun-boats, to be equipped as well as found by the ports, besides which the Admiralty had no 4-pound carronades to spare.

"The last observation is the more extraordinary, as only four or five of the boats required carronades so small as this, and there are plenty of larger ones in store." After which a correspondence took place between Mr. Pitt, Captain Essington commanding the Sea Fencibles at Dover, the Navy Board, and the Admiralty Board, the latter having reprimanded Captain Essington for encouraging the application about fitting the gun-boats, though he had been called upon by the Navy Board to state how many were required to be fitted; and at this moment no orders have been given by the Admiralty for the purpose, but they are now daily expected. Mr. Pitt has in the whole one hundred and fifty gun-boats."

Mr. Rose also tells us in his Diary, that on the 3rd of October, and by Mr. Pitt's invitation, he went with him to a public dinner at the London Tavern, on the swearing in of the officers of the Trinity House Volunteers. "The sight," he adds, "was really an extremely affecting one —a number of gallant and exceedingly good old men, who had during the best part of their lives been beating the waves, now coming forward with the zeal and spirit

of lads, swearing allegiance to the King, with a determined purpose to act manfully in his defence, and for the protection of the capital."

On the morning after this dinner Mr. Pitt appears to have returned to Walmer Castle. It was not until subsequently that Lord Castlereagh wrote him a reply.

Lord Castlereagh to Mr. Pitt.

"My dear Sir, "East Sheen, Oct. 6, 1803.

"I received your letter when in Suffolk. I cannot possibly misunderstand the motives which induced you to refrain from entering into any observations on the papers I sent you, and I trust those which led me to make the communication are not less obvious. I beg you will be assured that I am truly grateful for your invariable kindness to me on all occasions.

"With reference to the publication alluded to in your letter, having always considered that production as the deliberate and malicious effort of some individual to promote his own views through the separation of old friends, I very much regret not being so fortunate as to see you before you left town, as I think I could have satisfied your mind, from circumstances which incidentally fell within my own knowledge, that your impressions, as applied to the person to whom they seem principally to refer, are without foundation.

"Believe me ever, my dear Sir,

"Most sincerely yours,

"Castlereagh."

The spirit of the Volunteers, signally evinced as in

many other places, so at the banquet of the Trinity House on the 2nd of October, was further animated by a grand review on the 26th. Then several regiments of these gallant men, connected with London or its neighbourhood, were reviewed in Hyde Park by the King in person. A second review, comprising other regiments from the like district, took place on the 24th. Reckoning both days, upwards of twenty-seven thousand men were present under arms, and the concourse of spectators on the former has been estimated at two hundred thousand.[3] Many years afterwards Lord Eldon declared that this was, he thought, the finest sight that he had ever seen.[4] The King was in high health and excellent spirits. When the "Temple Companies" had defiled before him, His Majesty inquired of Erskine, who commanded them as Lieutenant-Colonel, what was the composition of that corps. "They are all lawyers, Sir," said Erskine. "What! what!" exclaimed the King, "all lawyers? all lawyers? Call them the Devil's Own—call them the Devil's Own!" And the Devil's Own they were called accordingly. Even at the present day this appellation has not wholly died away. Yet notwithstanding the Royal parentage of this pleasantry, I must own that I greatly prefer to it another which was devised in 1860. It was then in contemplation to inscribe upon the banner of one of the legal companies, "Retained for the Defence."

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[3] Ann. Regist., 1803, p. 450. [4] Twiss's Life of Eldon, vol: i. p. 416.

All through October and November Mr. Pitt continued to be busy with his Volunteers. Two of his familiar notes at this period refer, the first to the King's great review, and the second to one of his own :—

Mr. Pitt to Lord Mahon.

"DEAR MAHON, "Walmer Castle, Oct. 25, 1803.

"I am happy to think that your labours are drawing to a successful conclusion, and that we are likely to see you soon. Nothing can be more kind and liberal than the allowance you propose for your brothers. The sums you mentioned of 150*l.* per annum for Charles, and 70*l.* for James, will, I trust, be quite sufficient to defray all necessary expenses, and are at the same time not more than it is desirable they should receive. I flatter myself your kindness to them will be repaid by their progress in their professions, and their future success in life. Charles is very properly growing impatient to join his regiment at Ashford, and has therefore determined to go to town by the mail this evening, as the shortest way of completing his equipment. Lord Carrington and I are just setting out to one of our field-days at the Isle of Thanet, whilst you are probably a spectator at the magnificent review in Hyde Park. Lord Carrington returned your papers by Monday's post.

"Adieu! Ever affectionately yours,

"W. P."

"Walmer Castle, Tuesday, 6 P.M.

"DEAR MAHON,

"We settled with Colonel Cuppage to go to Barham Down to-morrow to see a review of horse artil-

lery. It occurs to me that probably some of the party at Deal Castle might like to see it also. In that case they must start precisely at nine, to be there at eleven. There is a good coach-road through Mongeham, which the Deal postilions of course know. Hester means to ride with me to Barham, but we all propose to return in a carriage; and if Lady Carrington can spare us one of the coaches, I will order horses to be put to it, instead of sending over two chaises. I conclude you will choose to *chevaucher*, escorting the ladies in the carriage.

"Affectionately yours,

"W. P.

"If the day proves bad, our party is to be put off till Thursday."

It may be observed in this letter that Mr. Pitt, from his reading of old French books, borrows from them *chevaucher*. That word is scarcely to be found in any of the classic writers of the reign of Louis the Fourteenth. The Dictionary of Furetière, published in 1701, mentions it as already obsolete and quite disused. No other has arisen in its place, and the French are obliged to express its meaning by the periphrasis *monter à cheval*. It is strange that a nation renowned among all others for its excellent cavalry should not have in its language any one word in actual use expressing "to ride."

It may also be observed that this letter implies a great intimacy between Lord Mahon and "the party at Deal Castle." Lord Mahon was indeed at this time residing with them. The legal settlements were in progress for his marriage with Miss Catherine Lucy Smith,

a younger daughter of Lord Carrington. It was a custom at that time, now almost wholly passed away, that marriages among persons of rank should not be solemnized in church, but rather by special licence at their private abode. According to this usage, the marriage in question was solemnized on the 19th of November in the dining-room of Deal Castle. Mr. Pitt, as a friend of both families, was present at the ceremony. He continued to extend a constant kindness to Lord and Lady Mahon, who went, in the first instance, to live at Maxton, two or three miles beyond Dover. Subsequently Mr. Pitt placed at their disposal a small house of his own, "the Cottage," which he had taken for the convenience of his guests at the gate of his Walmer grounds.

The meeting of Parliament had been fixed for the 22nd of November. Previous to this there were some slight changes in the Ministry. Mr. Charles Yorke had been named Secretary of State at the close of the Session, in the room of Lord Pelham, who was transferred to the Duchy of Lancaster; and a week before the meeting, another Secretary of State, Lord Hawkesbury, was summoned by writ to the House of Peers. This gave to the Government what they greatly needed—an accession of strength in that assembly. As it chanced, a similar accession fell at the same time to the share of Mr. Pitt; for the death of the first Lord Harrowby, in the course of the summer, transferred to the Upper House one of Pitt's most able and most trusted friends, Mr. Dudley Ryder.

Mr. Addington, besides his large Ministerial phalanx,

continued to have hopes of some scattered individuals from the Opposition ranks. On Sheridan above all he firmly reckoned. That eminent orator, through the greater part of the last Session, had given to the Government an undisguised support. Perhaps, as recollecting his earlier course, Sheridan may on some occasions have done so a little awkwardly. Once at least he provoked a bitter gibe on that account. "The Hon. gentleman," said Windham, "has this day shown all the zeal of a new convert in supporting administration, and, like a raw recruit, he has fired off his musket without ascertaining where the enemy is."[5]

In November following Fox writes as follows to Grey: "As to Sheridan, I think him even more gone than I had supposed. I dined with him one day at Brooks's, and another day at Lord George Cavendish's; and he certainly was rather run at, but he seemed to grow worse and worse."[6]

Another recruit, or semi-recruit, was Erskine. He certainly continued to have hopes of some official appointment from the Ministry. We find him in September write in confidence to Mr. Bond, one of the Lords of the Treasury, and hint that in certain cases he would much sooner support Addington than Fox. This letter has been found exactly where Erskine designed that it should go—that is, in Addington's desk.[7]

The course of Pitt at this time will best be shown by some correspondence which I now subjoin.

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[5] Parl. Hist., vol. xxxvi. p. 1679.

[6] Memorials of Fox, vol. iii. p. 436.

[7] See it at full length in Dean Pellew's Biography, vol. ii. p. 256.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Rose.

"DEAR ROSE, "Walmer Castle, Nov. 10, 1803.

"It would have given me great pleasure if I could have seen you here, but I am not surprised that your occupations have been too constant to allow of so distant an excursion, especially when the defence of your district seems to rest almost entirely on individual zeal and example. As far as they can go, fortunately you have been able to supply them in abundance from the circle of your own family; but these alone cannot be sufficient if Government persists in such unaccountable negligence and inactivity. Our state of defence is certainly (comparatively speaking) very complete, though still, in many respects, very far short of what it ought to have been, and what it easily might have been.

"On the whole, I think there is good ground to expect that we shall be able to give a very good account of any force that seems likely to reach any part of this coast, and shall be able to prevent its penetrating into the interior. But if, by any accident, we were to be overpowered in the first instance, I am by no means satisfied that any adequate force could be collected in time to stop the enemy's further progress till they had arrived much nearer the capital than we should like. I have been turning my thoughts a good deal to the object of rendering the Volunteer force throughout the country permanently more efficient than it seems likely to be (except in a few instances) under the present arrangements; and I will endeavour before long to send you a note of what occurs to me, on which I shall be very glad to have your opinion.

"Till within these two days I had persevered in the intention of going to town for the 22nd, but the state of the preparations on the opposite side, and the uncer-

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tainty from day to day whether the attempt may not be made immediately, make me unwilling to leave the coast at present. I have, therefore, nearly determined to give up attending the first day; but I am still inclined to think that it may be right (if I can find an interval of two days) to take some opportunity before the Recess to notice the principal omissions on the part of Government in providing for our defence, and to suggest the measures which seem still necessary towards completing it. I shall, of course, wish to have it understood by my friends that I shall probably attend in the course of the Session before Christmas, and that my absence on the first day proceeds entirely from my unwillingness to leave my duties here. Lord Camden (who left me this morning) and Lord Carrington are the only persons with whom I have had the opportunity of talking on this subject, and they both agree with me in thinking this the best plan.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"W. P."

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Rose.

"DEAR ROSE, "Walmer Castle, Dec. 2, 1803.

"I shall be so constantly occupied all next week in going round to my different battalions, that it will be impossible for me to think of going to town till the week after; but I hope to be at liberty on Monday se'nnight, and to reach town by dinner-time that day. I agree very much in all you say of the pamphlet, and I think particularly that a note, adding a much more ample statement on the finance, will be very useful in a new edition. We may talk of this more when we meet, which I hope will now be very soon.

"Ever yours,

"W. P."

Pitt went accordingly to town. On the 9th of December he appeared in the House of Commons, and took part in the debate—the field-day, as it proved, of that early Session. The Army Estimates were then the subject, or at least the occasion, of the contest. Windham began by a most ingenious and amusing speech in disparagement of the Volunteers. While admitting their zeal, he could not rely on their exertions, and must place his entire dependence upon regular troops. "Only think," he cried, "of trying to make soldiers as you would make freeholders—of giving experience and discipline as you would the franchise to resident inhabitants paying scot and lot!"

The new Secretary of State, Mr. Charles Yorke, replied to Windham on the part of the Government. Then Pitt rose. He also, in his opening sentences, adverted in terms of decided difference to the remarkable speech of his Right Hon. friend. But some further extracts from his own ample statement will show the defects which he imputed to the Ministry in their direction of the Volunteer force, and the practical improvements which he desired to suggest.

He began as follows:

"It is not my intention at present, Sir, to follow the example of my Right Hon. friend (Mr. Windham) in taking that detailed and comprehensive view of the subject before the Committee; neither is it my intention to go into any retrospective discussion of the measures of Government, nor to inquire whether the extraordinary means with which they were entrusted before the last prorgation of Parliament have been exercised

with sufficient vigour and ability. Considering the danger with which the country was threatened as not yet past, convinced that the crisis still impends, and that still we have further efforts to exert, and further precautions to adopt, in order to enable us to meet it, I am anxious to direct your attention only to such points as are particularly urgent, and on which delay would be inconvenient, if not dangerous; and to suggest prospectively the consideration of those objects which are immediately connected with the public security. . . . . I am the more anxious to do this, as I have the misfortune to differ fundamentally from my Right Hon. friend with regard to what should be the nature of that force to which we ought to look as a permanent source of safety throughout the whole of this contest, however long may be its duration. . . . . I was formerly, and still am, of opinion that to a regular Army alone, however superior, however excellent—that to the regular Army, even aided by the Militia, we ought not solely to trust; but that in a moment so eventful, in a crisis so full of danger, in a contest so singular in its character, and which, perhaps, may be tedious in its duration, we ought to superadd to the regular Army some permanent system of national defence, either to a certain degree compulsory, or formed upon the voluntary zeal and patriotism of the country itself. This ought to be resorted to as the grand source of domestic security. The Army must be the rallying point; the Army must furnish example, must afford instruction, must give us the principles on which that national system of defence must be formed, and by which the Volunteer forces of

this country, though in a military point of view inferior to a regular Army, would, fighting on their own soil, for everything dear to individuals and important to a state, be invincible. . . . . Contemplating all these great and important objects, I cannot but rejoice that the Volunteer system has been formed. . . . . I only wish that in the provisions which were enacted with regard to its extent, the numbers had been allotted with some relation to the local position and peculiar danger of the different parts of the country; I only wish that when it was fixed generally that the Volunteer force might be six times the number of the Militia, a greater proportion had been assigned, or a facility had been reserved, of increasing it in the maritime counties, or in those most vulnerable and most exposed to the first attacks of the enemy. I am sorry that a different distribution was not adopted with reference to the grand object of resisting and repelling the attempt of invasion in the first moment it should be made. I am confirmed by the opinions of much better judges than I can pretend to be of such a matter, that a much smaller force would be sufficient to harass or defeat the enemy on their first landing, than a much larger force after they had landed and recovered from the effects of their voyage. Both, therefore, with regard to the economy of money, but with regard to a much more important economy—that of lives, it would have been desirable that the number of Volunteers should have been increased and encouraged in proportion to the proximity to the coast, and to those points which are most liable to attacks. . . . . From what I have observed, and

from what I have heard of the state of the discipline of the Volunteers, I am more and more convinced that in order to bring them to any considerable degree of discipline, they must be assembled in bodies, and that if they continue in companies they will make but little comparative progress. It seems desirable, therefore, that wherever it can be done, they should be formed into battalions. Where that cannot be done, they ought to be formed and brought together into as numerous connected bodies as circumstances will permit, so as to have the benefit of inspection and discipline. It appears to me extremely desirable, therefore, that every battalion of Volunteers should, in addition to its own officers, have the assistance of two officers of the service, one a Field Officer and one an Adjutant, to assist in the instruction and discipline of the corps. These officers should be considered as belonging to the Army, and should in every respect enjoy their rank, pay, and other advantages, as if they were actually serving in the Army. . . . . I should imagine, however, upon a conjectural view of the matter, that the whole expense of a Field Officer and Adjutant for every battalion would not exceed 160,000*l.* or 180,000*l.* a-year. Now this expense surely is trifling in comparison with rendering three hundred and fifty thousand men an efficient and improving force. . . . . Before I sit down, I wish to say a few words respecting the exemptions to which Volunteers are entitled. It appears that what is understood to be the law on this subject is not what the Legislature intended. As the law stands, however, no exemption is allowed unless the person claiming it pro-

duces a certificate that he has attended twenty-four drills previous to the 21st of September. But there are many who have attended twice that number of drills without having such a certificate, and, therefore, would be subject to the ballot. If any doubt remains as to the exemptions, it is but right that the Legislature should pass an Act clearing it up, that those who were influenced by the prospect of exemptions, which they conceived were held out to them, may not have cause to complain that they were deceived by the ambiguity of the Acts of Parliament. There is another point. The law says that to entitle to exemption, the Volunteers claiming it must have been exercised with arms; yet, in some places, it was impossible to procure arms; nor am I surprised at it, considering the great and sudden demand for supplying the Army of Reserve and the great number of Volunteers throughout the country. Yet, in such cases, it surely would be unreasonable to refuse the exemption, when the claimants had actually learnt many very important, and, perhaps, some of the most tedious parts of discipline without arms."

Fox, like Windham, though on very different grounds, was no great friend to the national movement of defence. He had written to Grey in August from St. Ann's:—"Here we have Volunteers in plenty learning on the green to *stand easy*, and so forth; but not a single weapon, gun, or pike among them all, and this they call training!" And again in November:—"I mean on the day of the Army to support Windham cordially."[8]

[8] Correspondence, vol. iii. pp. 424 and 433.

And so he did on the 9th of December, in a most able speech. "All this," he cried, "is quite of a piece with the theatrical ostentatious foppery of the Volunteers, which seems fit for nothing but to be put on the top of a hill to be looked at!" But Fox was far from confining himself to this single topic of the Volunteers. He inveighed against the recent refusal of the King to give a military post to the Prince of Wales. He spoke of the necessity of a military council. He complained of the recall of his brother from the command in Ireland, and defended, at great length, his brother's conduct. No other fault, he said, could be laid to the General's charge than that he chanced to be brother of Mr. Charles Fox of the House of Commons, and first cousin of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. And he added, with perfect truth, "No man of General Fox's rank has, I believe, mixed less at any time in the politics of the day."

Both Thomas Grenville and Lord Castlereagh spoke in this debate, and both with great ability: the one in opposition to the Government, the other as a member of the Cabinet in its support. Mr. Secretary Yorke addressed the House a second time. He said that the points just urged by Mr. Pitt "deserved great consideration;" and he indicated that, as to some, he was inclining to adopt them. Adopt them in fact he did, and with the least possible delay. On the very next evening, the 10th of December, he rose in his place and brought in a Volunteer Exemption Bill, dealing with the doubts and difficulties on that subject which Pitt had stated. No light proof surely how well-

grounded were Pitt's suggestions, and how much of ascendency they carried with them.

On the 12th, upon the Report of the Army Estimates, the system of national defences was again discussed. Then Windham renewed his lamentations:—"Between Volunteers and Militia, the notion of a regular army has nearly dropped from your minds. You hardly inquire what it is or where it is to be found. It seems to be the least part of the national defence. *Pars minima est ipsa puella sui!*" Another man of genius injured only himself on this occasion:—"Erskine made a foolish figure, I hear, in the debate on the Report." So writes Fox, who was not present.

Pitt took that opportunity to renew and to guard from misconception some of his late proposals:—"One misconception," he said, "has possibly arisen from my wish to save the time of the House. So far from having for my object the appointment of field officers who were to have a control over the Colonels Commandant of the corps, nothing could be more repugnant to my feelings and sentiments. My sole and great object was to afford the Commandants of corps the benefit of the assistance and advice of officers not their superiors, but from experience competent to aid them. . . . . Such officers should not be placed over the Commandants of corps, but on the contrary be subordinate to them."

But here some practical objections were stated by the Government. "I fear," said Yorke, "it is out of the question to procure Field-Officers from the line in sufficient numbers." "I concur in the principle, but I have doubts of its practicability," said Addington. . . .

"I own, however, that I think the House indebted to the Right Hon. gentleman [no longer his Right Hon. friend] for his suggestion, as well as for that respecting Adjutants, which has been adopted, and which has produced much good effect."

Besides these measures of military armament, the renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus in Ireland, and a martial law for the same country, there was little business transacted in this early Session. On the 20th of December the House of Commons adjourned to the 1st of February following, and Pitt at once returned to Walmer Castle.

While the military measures, past and present, were thus on several occasions most fully discussed, it may be noticed that little or nothing had yet been said about the naval. In truth, however, as soon afterwards appeared, they were the weakest point in the whole administration. When it was first formed there were great hopes from Lord St. Vincent. His appointment was hailed on every side as the best that could be made. It proved, on the contrary, one of the very worst that the Admiralty of England has ever known. To this very day it is held up as a standing argument on the side of those who maintain that a landsman may often be preferred to a seaman as First Lord.[9]

I am far from denying, however, that Earl St. Vincent meant well. He must have felt a true zeal for that

[9] "But I have seen so many good and gallant Admirals make a very contemptible figure at this Board"—such are Lord St. Vincent's own words on his appointment. (Letter to the Duke of Grafton, dated Admiralty, Feb. 26, 1801.)

noble profession in which his own glory was achieved. To remedy the abuses in several departments, he instituted a Commission of Naval Inquiry, from which, as will be seen, some important results in general politics ensued. But his own reforms, as in the dockyards, were for the most part hasty, ill-considered, and imperious. Complaints and remonstrances, or, as his friendly biographer prefers to call them, "howlings and yells," arose on every side. "All this," adds the biographer, "Lord St. Vincent was prepared for; and, like Ulysses, he stopped his ears and pursued his way."[1] The first time perhaps that any Minister of State has been complimented for stopping his ears!

It is indeed only too plain that Lord St. Vincent would not listen to objections, and could not bear them with temper. When the press animadverts on his conduct, he declares himself "assailed by base hireling assassins!" When a naval officer of rank presumes to speak against him in the House of Commons, that officer becomes "a sneaking cur!"[2]

Still far more serious were the charges brought against Earl St. Vincent, that he had flattered himself to the last moment with the expectation of maintaining peace[3]—that he had reduced the navy to a very low ebb by the sale of ships and stores—that he had been feeble and remiss in his measures for the equipment of the fleet. Suffering from ill health, and governed by

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[1] Life of Earl St. Vincent, by Captain Brenton, vol. ii. p. 157.

[2] Letters of January 21, 1804, and May 19, 1806.

[3] "This I must admit to be true," writes Captain Brenton (Life, vol. ii. p. 212).

two or three personal favourites at the Board, it may be doubted whether the decisions that he made were all in truth his own. Certain it is that he evinced a wise and right judgment when, in March, 1803, he expressed to Mr. Addington his desire to resign. It is to be regretted, both for his sake and the country's, that from other political considerations he was at that time pressed and persuaded to continue at his post.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

1804.

Lord Grenville's proposed junction with Fox — Declined by Pitt — Party pamphlets — Illness of the King — Pitt's confidential conversation with Lord Malmesbury — Proposed adjournment of the House of Commons — Pitt's speech on the Constitutional doctrine — Volunteer Consolidation Bill — Errors of Government in the Military and Naval systems — Pitt's Motion on the State of the Navy — Interview between Pitt and Lord Eldon — Deaths of Lord Camelford and Lord Alvanley — Lord Moira at Edinburgh — Correspondence of Pitt with Lord Melville — Votes in both Houses of Parliament — Resignation of Ministers — The King applies to Pitt.

EARLY in the new year we find Mr. Pitt return to town.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Rose.

"Rochester, Saturday night,
"DEAR ROSE, Jan. 7, 1804..

"I write, having got thus far on my way to town. The weather seemed to allow me an interval in which I could leave the coast for a few days, and letters which I have had from some of my friends in town made me think it material not to delay coming up, in order to ascertain what is likely to be the state of parties when the House next meets.

"Much will depend on the line now to be adopted; and as I find I must give up going to Bath, and shall lose that chance of seeing you, I should be very glad

if you could, without inconvenience, meet me in town. I mean at present to stay over Thursday, and perhaps Friday, but that must depend a little upon wind and intelligence. The sooner therefore you can come the better.

"Ever yours sincerely,

"W. P."

The friend to whom in this letter Pitt especially refers as desirous to see him was Lord Grenville, and Lord Grenville's object was to propose a concert of measures and an unity of action between themselves and Fox. This scheme of systematic opposition was, however, steadily declined by Pitt. With some soreness on that ground, Lord Grenville wrote a few lines to his brother announcing the result.

Lord Grenville to Lord Buckingham.

"Grosvenor Square, Jan. 10,[1] 1804.

"I came here yesterday to meet the person to whom I wrote. I may be able to send you a detail by a safer opportunity, but there is little worth talking of. The same ideas prevail, and nearly the same course will be pursued. The most decided hatred and contempt of those who have done so much to provoke both, but views of middle lines, and managements, and delicacies *où l'on se perd.* "G."

Here is another entry of the same time from Wilber-

[1] Misprinted as the 30th in the Courts and Cabinets of George III., vol. iii. p. 342.

force's Journal:—"January 10, 1804.—After breakfast to see Pitt. Much political talk. Found him resolved not to hamper himself with engagements, or go into systematic opposition."

Lord Grenville, however, who very seldom receded from any ideas that he had once formed, determined to pursue the overtures which he had suggested. For these he had an excellent channel of communication in his brother Thomas Grenville, so long both the political and the personal friend of Fox. Soon afterwards he announced the result in a letter addressed to Walmer Castle.

Lord Grenville to Mr. Pitt.

"South Audley Square, Jan. 31, 1804.

"MY DEAR PITT,

"You will remember that I fully explained to you in our late conversations the decided opinion of those with whom I have acted for the last three years, that a declared and regular opposition to the present Government was now more than ever an indispensable public duty; and I stated to you the line which I thought it was likely we should pursue, when they were apprised by me that your resolution was finally taken not to act on any such opinion, either in the extended and comprehensive plan which, in common with them, I had wished, or even on any more limited scale. I mentioned this to you at the time as my own conjecture merely, and liable of course to be altered by discussion with them; but I found, in fact, that I had judged rightly of their opinion, which proved to be very little, if at all, different from that of which I had spoken to you.

"That personal affection which never can be altered by differences of political conduct, even if they were much greater than I flatter myself are at all likely to be found between us, and a determination that every part of my line shall be both open and unequivocal, make me very desirous not to withhold from you the knowledge of the step which we have taken in consequence of the opinions I have stated. In this communication you will find nothing more than you will hear declared in Parliament whenever the occasion shall arise. But you will attribute this circumstance not to any reserve of mine, but to the simple fact that, meaning to do nothing but what we think just and honourable in itself, and incumbent upon us as the necessary result of the opinions we have long professed, we are determined that what we do shall be openly avowed, without mystery or concealment of any kind.

"What I have therefore to state to you is, that an opportunity has been taken to explain to Mr. Fox, that we hold (and, as we believe, in common with him) two principles of action as indispensable to any reasonable hope of saving the country from its present dangers. First, that the Government which now exists is manifestly incapable of carrying on the public business in such a manner as the crisis requires, and that persons sincerely entertaining that opinion are bound to avow and actively pursue it; and, secondly, that if, now or hereafter, there should arise any question of forming a new Government, the wishes and endeavours of all who mean well to the country should be directed to the establishment of an administration comprehending as large a proportion as possible of the weight, talents, and character to be found in public men of all descriptions, and without any exception. To this was added our decided opinion that it was not necessary, for the pur-

pose of acting on these two principles, to extend the communication to any other matters whatever, or to enter into details of any kind not relating to the Parliamentary business which may from time to time be brought forward; and, above all, that anything leading to compromises of former opinions, or to engagements for future arrangements, was to be carefully avoided, in order that it might be at all times, and with the strictest truth, distinctly and publicly denied. . . . .

"I very much hope that you continue in the resolution of coming up, at all events, to the meeting of Parliament.

"Most affectionately yours,

"GRENVILLE."[2]

This letter is, I observe, docketed in Pitt's hand as "Answered," but I do not find any copy of that reply among his papers. It was, however, most distinctly in the negative.

I may here notice that the junction between Fox and the Grenvilles was not on either side called a "Coalition." They loved better to call it a "Cooperation." And this for two reasons. In the first place, the very name of Coalition had grown hateful from the evil precedent of 1783. Secondly, the junction in this case, as Grenville's letter clearly explains it, was not an entire concert of measures, but only an agreement to act together under certain circumstances and up to a certain point.

All this time the war of party pamphlets was still

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[2] Compare this letter with one from Fox to Grey, dated two days before, and printed in Fox's Correspondence.

raging. The 'Near Observer' had published two replies to the 'More Accurate Observer.' There had been another pamphlet on Addington's side, which was also anonymous, but which was subsequently ascribed to Dr. Bisset. To this last an answer was given by Mr. Robert Ward, without any announcement, but yet without any concealment, of his name. The last of these authors received the thanks of the statesman whom he had defended.

Mr. Pitt to Mr. Robert Ward.

"DEAR SIR, "Walmer Castle, Jan. 31, 1804.

"I am impatient to thank you for your letter, though I am unable to return as full an answer as I wish on the subject of it, as by some accident the pamphlet has not been forwarded to me in town. I have now written for it. In the mean time, if I were to judge only from the specimen of some material passages which have been extracted in the newspapers, I should have very little doubt what my opinion will be of the rest of the work. Now, however, that I know who is the author, I can hardly want any other proof to satisfy me that my cause could not have been placed in better hands, and that I shall have every reason to think myself highly indebted to the zeal and friendship which have prompted the undertaking.

"I am, with great regard,

"W. PITT."

On the 1st of February the House of Commons resumed its sittings, but Mr. Pitt delayed his return to town more than a fortnight longer. Lord Malmesbury,

in his diary, says: "I came to town with my family on the 8th of February.[3] I found the spirit of party very high, but Pitt still absent."

The noble diplomatist goes on to relate a new and afflicting incident of this period in public affairs: "On the 12th or 13th the King (after having taken cold by remaining in wet clothes longer than should be) had symptoms of the gout. He could not attend on the Queen's birthday, though he appeared in the evening at an assembly at the Queen's House; he was too lame to walk without a cane; and his manner struck me as so unusual and incoherent, that I could not help remarking it to Lord Pelham, who, the next day (for I went away early), told me that he had, in consequence of my remark, attended to it, and that it was too plain the King was beginning to be unwell. Lord Pelham, who played that evening with the Queen, added that her anxiety was manifest, since she never kept her eyes off the King during the whole time the party lasted."

The King was at first attended only by his household physician. He had conceived a strong dislike to the Doctors Willis, from the treatment which they had found requisite in his malady three years before—a feeling very frequent with persons in that afflicted condition. At his own urgent request, as his illness

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[3] The word is "January" in the published Diaries, vol. iv. p. 285; but this is plainly a slip of the pen either in the author or the editor, since the former proceeds to mention the debates in the House of Commons as in progress. There are some similar slips in the next page.

increased, another physician, Dr. Symonds, was called in. For two days His Majesty's life was in danger, and for at least a week the derangement of his mind was complete. By degrees he began to rally, but more slowly and with a greater tendency to relapse than either in 1789 or 1801.

It must be felt by critics now, as it was by politicians then, that this most unhappy illness of the King, at the very time when a foreign invasion was impending, tended not only to aggravate the dangers of the country, but to complicate, in a singular degree, the duties of its public men.

We may trace the crisis of alarm in Mr. Abbot's Diary: "February 16, 1804. Called on Mr. Addington, but did not see him. The Cabinet were sitting, and the physicians going in and out of the room. Mr. Addington was with the Prince of Wales at eleven. The Bulletin of this morning was, 'No material alteration has taken place since yesterday.'"

It was probably on the same day that Mr. Pitt returned to London. Ere long he had a most confidential conversation with Lord Malmesbury, which the latter has detailed.

"Sunday, February 19, 1804.—I called on Pitt, and met him as I was coming from his door, and returned with him. I said it was my wish to see him at this moment, and to hear from him his sentiments and intentions in the present very critical situation of affairs.

"He, without hesitation, entered into a very full and unreserved detail of both. He began by stating that the two very important events now pending, namely, the

probability of a very formidable invasion, and the dangerous state of the King's health, placed the country in a state of difficulty and danger dissimilar to any former one, and required from all those who were called on to act in public a very different mode of reasoning and acting than at any past period. To these points a third might be added, namely, the state of parties; and although these three considerations were in themselves separate and distinct, yet they bore very sensibly on each other, and, taken collectively, made the actual position of the country a very serious and alarming one. That he had given each of them due and serious attention, had weighed them in his mind maturely and leisurely, in order that he might determine safely and calmly on such a line of conduct as became him, and which he might never be sorry for; and that after the most diligent thought and reflection, he could see none better nor more conformable to his notions of what was right than to persevere in that which he had pursued for some time past.

"That, therefore, he would never make the turning out this administration the object of his endeavours; that though some of his best friends had united themselves avowedly for that purpose with Fox, yet he had rejected and would uniformly reject any overture which might be made to him to become a party to such a system.

"That in all simple and plain questions it was his resolution to support Government; but when Government omitted anything he thought the state of the country required to be done, or did it weakly and inefficiently, he then should deliver his sentiments clearly

and distinctly, but not even then in a spirit of opposition, since he would never do it till he had ascertained Government would persist in what he condemned, and not adopt what he thought essentially necessary.

"That towards office he would take no other step than such as might arise out of this conduct; and that he said this not from any foolish affectation of slighting the value of power and office, or even from a disinclination to resume it, but because he thought it conscientiously right, and should blame himself if he acted differently.

"But if, said he, from being out-debated (which they will be), or out-voted (which they will not be), Ministers should get frightened, and want to resign—or if, from a much greater improbability, they should, from the pressure of the times, get conscious and convinced of their own inadequacy to administer the government of the country, and were led to give up their places, in either of these cases he should look upon it as right and a duty to contribute towards forming a new administration by any means in his power; and, added he (stating a third case), this duty would be a paramount one, and superior to anything with him, namely, if the King should ever, from having either of the above-mentioned feelings, call upon him for his services.

"I never interrupted him during this discourse. When he had finished, I thanked him most sincerely for the confidential way in which he had spoken; that it gave me infinite pleasure, because it concurred most entirely with my own sentiments and principles; and that in now reassuring him of my adherence to him, I

had no other motive than doing what I considered as essentially right. He expressed great satisfaction at having my concurrence. He said, 'I should advertise you it has not that of my eager and ardent young friends, whom I know to be also yours (Canning and G. Leveson); but we are on the best of terms.'

"To this I assented, and asked whether they would abide by him or join the Grenvilles; adding, I had not seen Canning for several months. He said he did not exactly foresee how that would end; that he knew they had communication with the Grenvilles; and that he himself had been assailed in prose and verse by them; and that Canning, finding this fail, half staggered by his friendship for him and half disapproving all he did, knew no longer what to say, but had gone down to Mrs. Canning, where he now was.

"On the King's health he said he knew no particulars; but that if it was not soon restored, a Regency *must* be appointed; and he could not conceive that it would be different from the last projected Regency Bill in 1789.

"On my observing that the Prince of Wales had asserted that the King's illness *must* last several months, Pitt said,—

"'Thy wish was father, Harry, to that thought.'"

It was impossible that the King's real state should remain a secret from the country. Within a few days it came to be commonly known.

On Sunday, the 26th, two documents were published by authority. The one a prayer composed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and offering thanks to God "for

the hope and prospect of His Majesty's speedy recovery." The other a Bulletin issued by the physicians, and announcing that "His Majesty is going on favourably, though any rapid amendment is not to be expected." It could not fail to be noticed that these two documents contradicted each other.

Next day, the 27th, the physicians were again examined by the Cabinet. They declared that the King was perfectly competent to do any act of government, but that it would be prudent for some time to spare him all unnecessary exertion of mind. It is certain, indeed, that although the King's mind might be restored to soundness, it continued, during several weeks, to be highly nervous and excitable.

On this same evening (Monday the 27th) this delicate question was stirred in the Commons. Sir Robert Lawley moved an adjournment of the House, considering the notoriety of the King's illness, and pending a communication from the Ministers. Mr. Addington declared that his sense of duty led him to abstain from any communication at this time. Mr. Fox, with his usual eloquence, inveighed against the Minister's reserve. Then rose Mr. Pitt, who, in his speech—it was his first since the Recess—laid down what appears to be the true constitutional doctrine on the question.

"I confess that whatever opinion I may entertain upon the whole of that critical and anxious situation in which the country is now placed, and a more critical and anxious one never existed in the history of this country, I cannot think that the motion for an adjournment is one which, in any possible view of the subject,

can be either expedient or proper. I certainly do feel that if, unfortunately, the moment should come, which I most earnestly hope will never be the case, when Parliament shall be obliged to take cognizance of a suspension in the exercise of the Royal functions, from that moment I think, on the constitutional ground stated by the Hon. gentleman opposite to me (Mr. Fox), that Parliament should be precluded from doing any act except that of taking the necessary measures for supplying the deficiency in the executive branch of the Constitution. This is an opinion I have always entertained, and this is the conduct which was adopted by Parliament on a former occasion; and although, at the period to which I allude, there was a very considerable difference of opinion as to the particular mode which ought to be adopted, yet I believe the general principle which had been laid down was universally approved of. But I certainly do not think that a mere general apprehension and impression, however well founded they may appear to be, that the personal exercise of the Royal authority has been suspended, would justify Parliament in suspending all its other functions, unless that fact was communicated to them in a way that would render it necessary for them to take notice of it. If, however, the regular reports of the physicians appointed to attend His Majesty should induce gentlemen to think that it is the duty of Ministers, under all the circumstances of the case, to take immediate steps for making a communication to Parliament upon the subject, it is not only proper, but it is the duty of those Members who entertain that opinion, to inquire of

Ministers why they have not made such communication to Parliament? I confess I feel that it is a most difficult and arduous responsibility for Ministers to determine how long the communication ought to be delayed, and at what moment it ought to be made. . . . . I do, therefore, hope that Ministers will not, both for the sake of the Sovereign and of the country, push any feelings of delicacy, and sentiments of reverence and affection which they, in common with every loyal man in the country, must feel—I hope, I say, they will not push those sentiments to the extent of endangering that which has always been the dearest object of His Majesty's care, namely, the safety of those subjects whose happiness it has been the study of his life to promote."

After Pitt the debate proceeded. Windham and Canning, Grey and Grenville took part in it. But finally the motion of Sir Robert Lawley was negatived without a division. The House then passed to the Second Reading of the Volunteer Consolidation Bill,—a measure introduced by Mr. Secretary Yorke, with the view of bringing into one the divers Acts which referred to the Yeomanry and Volunteer Corps. Yorke endeavoured to confine the discussion to this single object. On the other hand, Windham and Grenville were determined that the discussion should have a wider range; and such was also Pitt's resolve. He began his speech as follows: "Sir, from the opinion of the Right Hon. Secretary that this discussion should be confined within narrow limits, and should apply solely to the measure immediately before the House, I decidedly differ; and with the sentiments of my Right Hon.

Friend on the lower bench (Mr. Thomas Grenville), that we are now called upon to take into view every thing connected with the national defence, I entirely concur."[4] Pitt then proceeded to explain at length the system which he deemed desirable, and the practical suggestions which had occurred to his mind.

These discussions on the Volunteer system continued during several days. It was observed in the course of them that the Prime Minister had become greatly chafed.

On the 10th of March we find Mr. Wilberforce write as follows to his friend Lord Muncaster:—"I really feel for Addington, who is a better man than most of them, though not well fitted for the warfare at St. Stephen's. He has exhibited—you, I think, would also interpret it this way—marks of soreness by losing his temper readily, once indeed without the smallest reason. Pitt on that occasion behaved nobly. Instead of retorting angrily, as I own I feared, or even showing any contemptuous coolness, he scarcely seemed conscious of Addington's having exposed himself, and answered with perfect good humour."

Thus had Pitt frankly and freely pointed out the errors of the Government in the Military system. But the errors in the Naval had grown to be greater still; and these Pitt felt it equally his duty to denounce, and, if he could, correct. On the 15th of March, according to a previous notice, he brought forward a motion on the state of the Navy. It was only a motion for papers,

[4] In the Parl. Debates, vol. i. New Series, p. 542, the latter allusion is explained as to Mr. Windham. But that gentleman had not yet spoken: he rose to follow Pitt.

but he acknowledged in his speech that he designed it as a censure upon Lord St. Vincent. A long and able debate ensued. Tierney, as Treasurer of the Navy, rose next, and sought to vindicate his chief. As regarded Pitt, he also indulged in a strain of great asperity. Sheridan in like manner resisted the motion, and attacked the mover in a speech, as Fox presently confessed, of the utmost brilliancy and eloquence. Addington himself spoke later in the night. But in spite of Sheridan's eloquence, and looking only to the facts alleged, Wilberforce might write in his journal: "Never was made a more wretched defence. I was moved," he adds, "by Tierney's low attack. I answered him quite without premeditation, and, as I was told, extremely well."

Fox also stood forth against Tierney and Sheridan. He did so with some difficulty, since he was, as he avowed, a personal friend and ally of Lord St. Vincent. But he declared that this was his very reason for agreeing to the motion. Any inquiry would be for the advantage of the noble and gallant Earl. It would vindicate his character in the fullest manner; it would prove him in every respect a perfect contrast to all his Cabinet colleagues in merit and renown.

This debate—enlivened also by some professional sparring between the Naval officers in the House—continued till a late hour in the morning. Then Pitt rose to reply. Late as was the hour, he delivered a long and animated speech. At its close he severely lashed his first opponent, Tierney.

"This new convert to the Treasury," continued Mr.

Pitt, "says that Lord St. Vincent is not so much alarmed, so panic-stricken as I am. I should be glad to know if this be the language of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If it be, what has the country to expect from his vigilance and energy? The Army, although not so powerful as I could have wished, yet has made the most noble display of patriotism. The new military system, that of the Volunteers, owes not its origin to the present Ministers. It was a favourite system of the last Ministers. The present men in power have frequently adopted, but seldom projected, any measure whatever. With all my respect, nay, affection for the new Military system, our Naval defence is that on which we should chiefly rest our hopes. Our Navy is the grand and proud bulwark of our fame—that Navy which has extended our commerce, our dominion, and power to the most remote parts of the world—that Navy which has explored new sources of wealth, which has discovered new objects of glory. Let us, therefore, augment, rather than diminish, the pride of the nation, and let us not be referred back to dry periods of history, when all comparisons are absurd and unavailing. Let us watch with the greatest jealousy and circumspection the rise and progress of the new marine of France, so dangerous to the interest and glory of this country. Let us watch France more actively than in former times, because she has attained new and extraordinary energies. Her present exertions are unprecedented in history. We ought to meet them with at least equal, not inferior, activity and energies." The scanty report of this night's proceedings here states that "after a variety of

arguments, Mr. Pitt noticed the conduct of Mr. Sheridan in substance nearly as follows:"—"Among the many assaults which I have had to repel this evening, was one from a very brilliant flash of lightning, a meteor which for some time has moved neither on the one side nor on the other; a meteor whose absence all may with me have regretted; a meteor which, on its return, concentrating its force, has fixed its rays of resentment and indignation against me—but in whose blazing face I can look without fear or dread. No insinuations, however bitter or bold, will ever induce me to surrender my freedom in this House. I am fully determined not to renounce my privileges as a member of Parliament. I admire the uncommon valour, I extol the vast renown, the glorious achievements of Lord St. Vincent. To him we are highly indebted for shedding extraordinary lustre on our national glory. I did believe that when his Lordship took upon himself the direction of our Naval affairs, the public service would derive great benefit from his patriotic exertions and professional skill. I did believe that his name, in whatever Naval capacity, was a tower of strength; but I am apt to think that between his Lordship as a commander on the sea, and his Lordship as First Lord of the Admiralty, there is a very wide difference."

The full sting of this reply is not perhaps apparent on perusal. We must remember that the countenance of Mr. Sheridan bore marks of his deep potations, and had grown to be in its colour almost crimson; while it was still lighted up by eyes of extraordinary brilliancy and power. With this hint we may the better ap-

preciate the happy similitude of the meteor and its "blazing face."

After this reply, and a few more words from Sir William Pulteney, the House divided, when the numbers were,—

For Mr. Pitt's motion	130
Against it	201
Majority	71

Writing a week or two later, Wilberforce observes that he found many persons condemn Pitt's motion on the Navy as factious; but he declares his own full conviction that it has done good:—"The Admiralty, I am glad to hear, are exerting themselves with double, I should rather say tenfold, activity."

On the 19th the Volunteer Consolidation Bill was brought up on Report. Fox moved that the Bill should be recommitted. In a vehement speech he condemned the many shortcomings of the Government. "But," he said in conclusion, "I do not tremble so much, because I do believe that even all these things cannot destroy the spirit of the country. It will, I am sure, not only rise superior to every effort of the enemy, but I am sanguine enough to believe—and I cannot reach a higher climax—that it will rise superior to the weakness, the incapacity, and the imbecility of the present Ministers!" Fox was supported by his new allies—Windham and Thomas Grenville; but his motion for the recommitment was opposed by Pitt, and on a division rejected by 173 votes against only 56.

Next day, the 20th, the Chancellor, Lord Eldon, being in the strongest manner impressed with the aggravation to the public dangers produced by the King's state of mind, sought an interview with Mr. Pitt. He sent him a note through his eldest son, who was at that time member for Boroughbridge. Pitt replied as follows:—

"York Place, Tuesday night,
"MY DEAR LORD, March 20, 1804.

"Mr. Scott was so good as to give me your note this evening in the House of Commons. I am very glad to accept your invitation for Saturday, as, whatever may be the result of our conversation, I think the sooner we hold it the better. The state of public affairs makes it impossible that the public suspense can last very long, and nothing can give me more satisfaction than to put you confidentially in possession of all the sentiments and opinions by which my conduct will be regulated.

"Yours very sincerely,
"W. PITT."

Pitt went accordingly, and dined *tête-à-tête* with the Chancellor. What passed is nowhere to be found recorded. Later in the year Addington mentioned the transaction to his friend the Speaker. He did not deny that the Chancellor had stated the interview to him, but complained that this communication had not been made until a month afterwards.[5]

In the course of this month the Pitt family lost its head. The second Lord Camelford, who had succeeded his father in 1793, was a young man of generous feelings,

[5] Diaries of Lord Colchester, Oct 29, 1804.

but strong passions and eccentric views. Once, to bring the nomination system into contempt, he had threatened that he would cause his negro footman to be elected for one of his boroughs. Engaging in a duel—in which he was, as he owned, the aggressor—he was mortally wounded, and lingered only a few days. His title became extinct, and his large estates in Cornwall devolved upon his only sister, Lady Grenville.

On the 20th of March died also one of Pitt's earliest and dearest friends—Richard Pepper Arden, now Lord Alvanley, and Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. "I was overcome with the event to tears," writes Wilberforce, another early friend. "In the evening Pitt showed me a few lines Arden had written to take leave of him the night before his death, recommending his son, Pitt's godson, to Pitt's protection."

The decease of the Lord Chief Justice gave Addington an opening, of which he immediately availed himself, to offer Erskine the post of Attorney-General. Erskine was very well inclined to accept it. For the last two years at least he had been edging away from his former chief at St. Ann's. Of late moreover the estrangement had widened. Erskine had combined with Sheridan to draw up and transmit to Fox, through the Duke of Norfolk, a remonstrance signed by themselves and others, and levelled at his recent junction with the Grenvilles. But Erskine was not quite a free agent. So early as 1784 he had been appointed Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales, and on receiving Addington's proposal of the higher post, deemed it necessary, through Sheridan, to consult His Royal Highness.

In the past year His Royal Highness had been by no means very averse to Addington; but he had fixed his heart on a high military post and rank, and when this was refused by the King, he had extended his resentment to the Minister. Under these circumstances he returned to Erskine, also through Sheridan as the channel, not indeed a negative, but a very discouraging reply.[6] Erskine was determined at all events not to lose the Prince's favour, and thus impelled he said No to Addington.

Exactly similar was the case of Sheridan himself. It is certain, says Thomas Moore as his biographer, that a proposal of office was made to him at this time; but Sheridan was even much more an intimate of Carlton House than Erskine, and as soon as he ascertained the Prince's bias, there could be no doubt of his reply.

When Sheridan thus laid aside all hopes from a new chief, he reverted as speedily as possible to the allegiance of his old one. It is amusing to find Fox write to Grey as follows, the date of this letter being St. Ann's, April 6, 1804:—"Sheridan has been here, and I judge is very desirous of getting right again, but you will easily believe my dependence on him is not very firm."

Fox himself was now in thorough opposition. His language about Addington, in his familiar letters, had grown to be most bitter and most hostile. Thus he writes to Grey:—"Let us first get rid of the Doctor!—is my first principle of action, in which I reckon you as concurring with me as much as any one." And again,

[6] Moore's Life of Sheridan, vol. ii. p. 323.

to Lord Lauderdale:—"The Doctor has exceeded, if possible, all his former lies in what he said about the Russian business. It is, I own, an ignoble chase; but I should have great pleasure in hunting down this vile fellow."[7] Mr. Fox did not then foresee that within two years of that date this "vile fellow" would become his own colleague in the Cabinet.

At nearly the same period, the Earl of Moira, who was residing at Edinburgh as Commander of the Forces in Scotland, and who then stood foremost in the favour of the Prince of Wales, had a long and interesting conversation on the state of public affairs with the Lord Advocate, Mr. Charles Hope. Hereupon the Lord Advocate addressed the following letter, marked "Confidential," to his friend and kinsman, Henry Dundas, Lord Melville:—

"My dear Lord, "Edinburgh, March 22, 1804.

"Lord Moira returned yesterday, and I had a card from him early this morning; in consequence of which I waited upon him this forenoon, and had a very long and unreserved conversation with him, the particulars of which, till he could have a personal interview with you, he desired me to communicate.

"First, as to the King. He assured me that he is still far from well in point of mind, occasionally collected, but for the much greater part of the day very incoherent, and at times still very violent; so much so, that within this week, on their not letting the Duke of York see him, according to promise, he was so outrageous that they were obliged to put him to bed, and

[7] Letters of April 13 and March 25, 1804.

strap him down. He is very anxious to see the Duke, but the physicians are against it. He at first refused to see the Chancellor, unless they would allow him to see the Duke also. They agreed, but after his interview with the Chancellor he was so agitated that they would not let him see the Duke.

"They pacified him then, and fixed on last Thursday for an interview between them; but when Thursday came they broke faith with him, which occasioned the return of mania which I have mentioned.

"In short, he is in that state that he cannot bear anything to agitate or contradict him, and therefore, although at times collected, remains substantially unfit for business. He says that Ministers, or rather Mr. Addington, are following a most extraordinary game; that they will not make a Regency, but that their intention is at present to get the King down to Kew as soon as possible (for which purpose they are finishing and furnishing the new palace as fast as possible), and when there, to get him to sign a Council of Regency, proceeding on the narrative that the fatigue of business is too much for his health at present, and therefore that he devolves the ordinary administration of government on this Council, with instructions to refer to him only on extraordinary occasions. The Prince to be a member of this Council, which, in other respects, is of course to be composed of Mr. Addington and his friends. The Prince, however, has resolved not to have anything to do with such a Council, and Lord Moira added that he does not believe that it is agreeable to the Queen. He says that the discontent in London is prodigious; the very people who are voting with Mr. Addington make no secret that they do it only because, in the present state of things, they know not what else to do.

"Now as to the Prince. Lord Moira told me that

His Royal Highness had very early sent a message to Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey, that he was very sensible of their attachment, but that in the event of his government, either as King or Regent, as he intended to throw himself entirely into Lord Moira's hands, he did not think it right, in his absence, to see either of them, that Lord Moira might not suppose that he had formed any opinion, or even taken up any impression, without consulting him. That the Prince had accordingly thrown himself upon him for advice, which Lord Moira gave him, as nearly as I can recollect, to the following purpose:

"'That your Royal Highness must see, in common with the whole country, that the present Ministry are utterly incapable of governing the country, or even of perceiving, to its full extent, the critical situation in which it is placed; that nothing can save the country but the union of all the talent in it, so as to ensure not only vigour in our councils, but perfect confidence and unanimity in the people, and an effectual and decisive co-operation on the part of some of the great continental powers.

"'Before, therefore, I can go further, or can judge whether I can be of use to your Royal Highness, have you the magnanimity and good sense to lay aside any feeling of estrangement, right or wrong, which you may entertain against the late Ministers, and to stretch forth your hand to Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville, and call on them to assist you in the government of the country in these anxious times?' He said, the Prince wanted at first to parry the question, by saying that Mr. Pitt would not act under Lord Moira, and that no other man should be his Minister; but Lord Moira answered, 'First let me know your Royal Highness's feelings, without which it is unnecessary to talk of Mr. Pitt's.' The Prince still

parried him by saying that Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox would not act together. But Lord Moira still insisting for an answer, the Prince asked him, 'Do you really think this necessary for the good of the country, and for the honour of my government?' Lord Moira answered him that he did; that he considered Mr. Pitt's co-operation as essential; and that the Prince's only chance for governing the country without Mr. Pitt, with any degree of comfort, was at least to satisfy the public that the refusal came from Mr. Pitt, and not from His Royal Highness. 'Then,' said the Prince, 'I submit myself entirely to your opinion;' but added that he, Lord Moira, must still be his Minister, and that he was sure Mr. Pitt would never act in a subordinate situation. Lord Moira answered, 'Whatever situation your Royal Highness may intend for me, Mr. Pitt shall not feel himself subordinate; he never can be subordinate in any Cabinet; and on the footing of the broad union which I propose, I shall consider my business in the Cabinet to be to moderate between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox.'

"'Well, then,' said the Prince, 'bring this about; but I still doubt that the materials will be too discordant.' Lord Moira replied that the pressure of the moment would, he was sure, make them go on cordially as long as the necessity lasted; after that they might quarrel, as other administrations had done, without much harm to the country. Thus the conversation with the Prince ended; and Lord Moira says that he left him perfectly made up to the resolution of endeavouring to form the broadest administration possible, without reference to former prejudices or parties. He told me that he had not any channel in London, that he was quite satisfied with, through which he could sound Mr. Pitt on the subject; and I take it for granted,

by his expressly saying that I was at liberty to communicate this to you, that he trusts to you to do so. But I think you ought not to do it on this letter alone, as you will so soon have an opportunity of hearing more accurately, from his own mouth, those particulars which I have strictly endeavoured to detail. On other points, he says that a war with Spain is now unavoidable, and on the expectation and belief that the Spanish fleet is immediately coming out to join that of France that an expedition, on a great scale, is preparing against some of the Spanish settlements. He adds that the Prince and the Duke, he trusts, will soon be cordial.

"I will not mix my own reflections with the above detail, especially as I hope it will induce you not to postpone your return here longer than is absolutely necessary.

"Ever, my dear Lord, yours faithfully,

"C. HOPE."

Lord Melville being then, it seems, further north—namely, at Dunira in Perthshire—communicated by letter to Mr. Pitt the information which he had thus received from the Lord Advocate. In reply to his letter, Mr. Pitt wrote the following masterly view of the chief political considerations at that time:—

"York Place, March 29, 1804.

"DEAR LORD MELVILLE,

"Before I received your letter I had determined to write to you fully on my view of the present state of affairs previous to my leaving town, which I shall do to-morrow. I will now begin with Lord Moira's letter. I cannot help thinking that his information respecting the King's health has been by no means correct, though I

have no doubt he believes it to be so. All the accounts which have reached Carlton House, or at least (*between ourselves*) which have come from thence, have uniformly represented the King's state as worse than it in truth has been, and cannot be reasoned upon without great allowance. I do not however mean to say that I consider a speedy and complete recovery as by any means certain; and I am afraid, although things looked more favourably than Lord Moira supposes at the dates he refers to, that within these few days the progress has been materially interrupted. Under these circumstances it is undoubtedly still possible that a Regency (for a shorter or longer time) may become inevitable; and though I entertain a very strong hope that it will not happen, it is right for public men to be prepared for such an event.

"With respect to the Prince's intentions, I must also say to you confidentially that I fear no very certain dependence is to be placed on any language which he holds. The conversation which Lord Moira reports to have passed with himself is certainly at variance with the assurances which I have good reason to believe the Prince has held out to other quarters. He has certainly seen both Fox and Grey. The former, I have good reason to believe, understands that in the event of the Prince having the Government in his hands, it is by his (Fox's) advice that he would be guided; and I believe too that his advice is likely to be to apply to me with a view of forming a strong and comprehensive Government.

"Having said thus much to explain to you why I am not disposed to rely too much on any professions till the moment for actual decision arrives, I have no hesitation in stating that I quite agree with you in thinking that nothing could be so creditable for the Prince, or so

useful to the public, as his really and sincerely acting on the idea of forming such a Government as I have stated. But with respect to the possibility of carrying it into effect, as far as I am concerned, you will not, I think, wonder at my saying that I do not see how, under any circumstances, I can creditably or usefully consent to take part in any Government without being at the head of it; and I should be very sorry that either Lord Moira, or, through him, the Prince, should suppose that there is any chance of my changing my opinion on this point.

"There is another point of more delicacy and difficulty on which I can scarce form my decision beforehand, because it must depend so much on the precise circumstances of the moment. Much as I wish a strong Government, and prepared as I am for that purpose to put aside the recollection of former differences, if a cordial union can be formed on public grounds for the future, I still should feel a great doubt whether it would be right during the King's illness, and while any reasonable chance exists of his recovery, to form any connexion which might preclude him from a fair option in forming an administration, whenever he might resume the exercise of his authority. This doubt rests, as you will perceive, entirely on the feeling of what is due to the King; and strong as that motive is, I am nevertheless aware that there may be cases in which considerations of public safety will perhaps not allow of its being yielded to beyond a certain point. From what I have now said you will see exactly the state of my mind on the whole of this subject, and will be enabled, in conversing with Lord Moira, to give him your opinion (so far as you may think it right to do so) of what would be my probable line of conduct.

"I wish now to call your attention to the other (and

I hope the more probable) alternative of the King's speedy recovery. In that event I am strongly confirmed in the opinion that the present Government cannot last for any length of time, and still more so in the full conviction that every week for which its existence may be protracted will be attended with increased danger to the country. I have therefore satisfied myself that the time is near at hand at which, if a change does not originate from the Ministers themselves or from the King, I can no longer be justified in not publicly declaring my opinion, and endeavouring by Parliamentary measures to give it effect. My present notion therefore is to take the first moment after the present Recess, at which the state of the King's health will admit of such a step, to write a letter to His Majesty stating to him the grounds of my opinion, explaining the dangers which I think threaten his Crown and his people from the continuance of his present Government, and representing to him the urgent necessity of a speedy change. From what I have already said in a former part of this letter, you will not be surprised at my saying that the change to which I should point as most beneficial would be one which would introduce precisely the same description of Government as I think desirable in the other event of a Regency. From various considerations, however, and still more from this last illness, I feel that a proposal to take into a share in his councils persons against whom he has long entertained such strong and natural objections ought never to be made to him, but in such a manner as to leave him a free option, and to convince him that if he cannot be sincerely convinced of its expediency, there is not a wish to force it upon him. I should therefore, at the same time, let His Majesty understand distinctly, that if, after considering the subject, he resolved to exclude the friends both of

Mr. Fox and Lord Grenville, but wished to call upon me to form a Government without them, I should be ready to do so, as well as I could, from among my own immediate friends, united with the most capable and unexceptionable persons of the present Government; but of course excluding many of them, and above all, Addington himself, and Lord St. Vincent.

"From what we both know of the King's character, I am persuaded this manner of bringing the subject before him is more likely than any other to bring him to consider fairly the advantages which I am sure he personally would derive for the remainder of his reign in an equal degree with the country from the extinction of parties, and the establishment of a Government uniting all the weight and talents of the day, and capable of commanding respect and confidence both at home and abroad.

"Whatever might be the success of this measure, with a view either to the more extended or narrower plan of Government, I should have acquitted myself of my duty to the King; and if it produces no effect, I should then have no hesitation in taking such ground in Parliament as would be most likely to attain the object. You will have seen by the division on my Naval motion, that a good deal has been already done to shake the Government, and I have no doubt that on any strong question respecting the Public Defence, we should be able after Easter to produce much greater numbers. Fox is taking steps to muster all his friends, of whom not more than five-and-twenty voted on that occasion. On any future trial of strength, I have no doubt of their being between sixty and seventy, and he is certainly prepared to support a question of the nature I have stated, under the full knowledge that if the result produces the removal of the present Government,

I hold myself at full liberty to form a new one without reference to him. Of my own friends many were also absent on the former vote, whose attendance may be easily ensured for the next. If in addition to this, we procure, as I think probable, some considerable strength from Ireland, and if upon what I have stated you think it possible to collect a large proportion of our friends from your part of the world, I entertain very little doubt that the success of our effort would be nearly certain. I am aware that with the important local duties, which belong at this time to persons of weight and property in Scotland, it is more difficult than usual to bring them from their homes. But I think their attendance would not be required here for more than ten days, or at most a fortnight, as the fate of two or three motions must be decisive one way or other; and a short absence for such a purpose would perhaps be the most effectual way of consulting the security both of Scotland and every other part of the empire.

"You will be the best judge what is the earliest day on which any attendance from Scotland could be reckoned upon. It would be very desirable that it should not be later than the 18th, or at farthest the 20th of next month.

"I shall naturally be very desirous of hearing your sentiments on the whole of this subject; and though the contents of this letter are of course of the most secret nature, there is no part of it which I should not be very glad that you should show in confidence to the Duke of Buccleuch and the Lord Advocate.

"Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

Mr. Pitt, as he announces in his letter to Lord Melville, left town next day, that is on the 30th of

March, for Walmer Castle. There in a short time his correspondence was resumed. But for the most part it was not carried on by the post. "I shall continue"—so says Lord Melville in his letter to Pitt of the 3rd—"I shall continue to address you through Alexander Hope's conveyance, as I remember our friend Bathurst very strongly hinted to me last year to beware of the Post Office, when you and I had occasion to correspond on critical points or in critical times."

Mr. Pitt to Lord Melville.

"Walmer Castle, April 11, 1804.

"DEAR LORD MELVILLE,

"I have received your letters of the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th, and am much obliged to you for the ample and satisfactory communication they contain. I was very happy to learn from the first of them that you concur so completely in the line of conduct which I stated to you.

"I perfectly agree in the sentiments you express in your letter of the 3rd, respecting the propriety of a full explanation of future intentions to Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, in the event of being obliged to form a narrow Government; and enough has been said already (to one directly, and through pretty certain channels to the other) to prepare them for receiving it.

"The letters of the 4th and 5th relate to the probable accession of strength from Scotch Members. I have desired William Dundas to take the steps you recommend respecting General Mackenzie and Sir James Montgomery, and I mean to write to-day to Lord Dalkeith. From the account you give of Sir James Grant's situation, I cannot by any means bring myself

to wish that his son should incur the risk of giving us a vote which, in the event (improbable as it is) of the Government standing its ground, might lead to such serious consequences to his family.

"In another letter of the 4th, you express a curiosity to know which of the present Ministers I had looked to as feeling the insufficiency of the present Government, and wishing my return to office. The Duke of Portland was certainly one of the foremost in my contemplation. Sentiments on his part, similar to those conveyed in his letter to you, have reached me from several authentic channels: and I really believe that he has been induced to remain so long in his situation only from personal regard to the King, and the hope of being better enabled to watch the moment of disposing his mind to a change. In addition to this I have had strong grounds to believe that the same sentiment has been strongly felt by the Chancellor, my brother, Lord Castlereagh, Yorke, and Lord Hobart; I believe too by Lord Hawkesbury, but of him I have not heard it so pointedly. Of them the Chancellor was the person whom I thought most likely to give effect to his opinion. But though I have no reason, from anything I have observed, since I first wrote to you, to doubt the existence of this disposition in all the persons I have enumerated, and in some of principal weight out of the Cabinet, I have less expectation than I had, of its leading to any practical result. I know recently from what seems good authority, that Addington's resolution is taken not to retire unless forced to it; and I believe his colleagues will think themselves too much committed to him, not to support him in that determination, however they may in their own minds disapprove of it. If I am right in this supposition, it will remain only to see what effect may be produced by my communication to the King. I do not

expect much advantage from it beyond that of representing my conduct to His Majesty in its true light, and having myself the satisfaction of having endeavoured as far as depends upon me to save him from the disquietude and anxiety of seeing his Government shaken, if not displaced, by a strong Parliamentary opposition.

"This step, however, I cannot yet take, and must wait till his recovery is more confirmed. By the accounts I had yesterday I have no doubt that he is *now* getting quite well, and that official business begins to be submitted to him as usual; but I think another week at least must elapse, before I can be justified in writing to him on so delicate a point. Whenever I take the step, you shall have a copy of my letter.

"In the mean time questions must occur probably in next week, on which I must take part—as I think it absolutely necessary to oppose Yorke's Bill for suspending the completion of the Army of Reserve; conceiving as I do, and in which I know I agree with you, that that measure properly modified, may make the foundation of the most effectual permanent mode of augmenting and maintaining the regular Army, and form in itself a most important branch of our future military system. I mean for this purpose to return to town, Monday or Tuesday, in next week. Our principal push must probably be made about the Monday following, that is the 23rd, and on some one or two days more, between that and the 30th; after which, if the contest is not successful, I shall return hither to my Volunteers, and wait the issue of the contest of another kind, in which we must probably be engaged before the summer is over. Under these circumstances the more you can hasten the departure of such of our friends as are not yet set out, the better.

"I have said nothing in answer to that part of your

letter which relates to the Lord Advocate's situation, because you will easily conceive that your reasoning and the decision upon it are perfectly satisfactory. The account of your last conversation with Lord Moira reached me this morning, and requires no particular observation. He seems to have been very fair and candid, and as explicit as could be expected.

"Ever sincerely and affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."

Meanwhile the Easter holidays having passed, Parliament had met again on the 5th of April. On Monday the 16th Mr. Pitt returned from Walmer Castle, and on the same evening took part in the debates of the House of Commons; the question being the Third Reading of the Bill for the Augmentation of the Irish Militia. Mr. Pitt, as also Mr. Fox, spoke against it as inadequate to the national defence; and in the division which ensued the Government had a majority of only 21, the numbers being,

For the Bill	128
Against it	107
Majority	21

Mr. Pitt to Lord Melville.

"York Place, Tuesday, April 17, 1804.

"DEAR LORD MELVILLE,

"On arriving in town yesterday just before the House met, I learnt circumstances which leave no doubt that Government has taken very serious alarm. That

alarm will not have been diminished by the division of yesterday; and I am much inclined to think that in a few days they must capitulate. If not, I am more and more convinced that in the course of next week they will be either beat on a division, or run so near as to prove the impossibility of their standing.

"On looking into the state of the House of Lords, we find that we can probably make almost as strong an impression there as in the House of Commons; and it is nearly settled that some question will be moved in the Lords, on Thursday se'nnight, of a nature to try our strength to advantage. Lord Stafford, I believe, will move it. The importance of collecting all our strength on that occasion will, I hope, induce you to reconsider your intentions with respect to yourself. While the discussion was likely to be confined to the House of Commons, any object there might perhaps be gained by the appearance of the recruits you had sent us, but in the House of Lords your personal presence will be highly material.

"Independent, however, of all questions of Parliamentary strength, I am for still stronger reasons most anxious for your presence. It is not only in the event of my being compelled to make a narrow Government that I should feel your assistance indispensable. But even if we succeed in forming one as strong and comprehensive as we wish, I see no possible reason (public or private) why you should not return to a seat in the Cabinet, with the Board of Control, and the management of Scotland. Neither of these can be a burden to you, or interfere with your plans of health and comfort for a large part of the year. In short, on every account, I am most anxious to have you on the spot, and earnestly beg you, if possible, to set out immediately.

"I will send you some blank proxies by to-morrow's post, to be filled up by any Peer you can apply to, who cannot personally attend. You can hardly at any rate set out before that letter reaches, but if you should, pray leave directions with some one to open it.

"In great haste,

"Ever sincerely yours,

"W. PITT.

"The crisis seems so near, that Hope writes to the Advocate to urge his coming up if possible. He clearly should not resign till he comes to London, and it may then be unnecessary."

Mr. Pitt to Lord Melville.

"York Place, Wednesday, April 18, 1804.

"DEAR LORD MELVILLE,

"Friday se'nnight is the day now fixed for Lord Stafford's motion in the House of Lords, and he means to give notice to-morrow. You will, I hope, receive by this post some blank proxies, and you will be able to judge who there are in Scotland whom you can prevail upon to make use of them. As it will be uncertain what Peers may be at liberty to receive them, it will be desirable to get them signed, leaving a blank for the persons to whom they are to be entrusted.

"I have found it convenient, with a view to a full attendance, to defer my opposition to Yorke's Bill from to-day, when it is to be read a second time, till Friday, when it will be reported. We shall, I am persuaded, have a very strong division then, and another on Monday, when Fox is to move for a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the state of defence. All this course may, however, very probably become unne-

cessary, as the expectation I expressed to you yesterday has been strongly confirmed by what I have heard since; and I have great reason to think it probable that I shall be called upon, from the only proper quarter, to explain fully my sentiments before the end of the week.

"I hope any other letter I may wish to send will find you on the road, and if I have anything material to say, I will endeavour to find out where it will be most likely to meet you.

"Ever yours affectionately,

"W. P."

The expectations hinted at by Mr. Pitt in this last paragraph are best elucidated by a letter from Lord Grenville, which the Duke of Buckingham has published. That letter is of great historical value as the sole remaining record, so far as I am aware, of the communication which it details.

Lord Grenville to the Marquis of Buckingham.

"April 19, 1804.

"Yesterday Pitt wrote to desire me to call upon him, which was for the purpose of telling me that Addington, since the division of Monday, had sent a message to him to desire to know whether he was willing to state, through any common friend, what his opinions were as to the present state of things, and the steps to be taken for carrying on the King's affairs. Pitt's answer was, that neither through a common friend, nor in any other mode, could he make any such statement to Mr. Addington, or for his information; but that if the King thought proper to signify to him through any person with whom he could hold such communication his com-

mands to that effect, it would be his duty to state to such person, and for His Majesty's information, his unreserved opinion as to the steps which ought to be taken for the establishment of a new Government. The reply to this was, that Mr. Addington acquiesced in this decision, and was to see His Majesty yesterday, or to-day—I am not quite sure which—for the purpose of submitting to His Majesty his humble advice, that His Majesty should, without delay, commission the Chancellor to see Mr. Pitt, and to receive from him the communication of his opinion on the present state of affairs.

"This has been communicated by Pitt to Fox; and it has been further explained both to him and me, that although Pitt does not pledge himself not to obey the commands he may receive for attempting to form an exclusive Government, yet that his earnest endeavour will be used for his own sake, as well as for that of the King and the country, to induce His Majesty to authorize him to converse with Fox and me on the means of forming an united Government.

"Here the matter now rests, and in the mean time it is determined on all hands to be indispensably necessary that the course in Parliament which has produced this tardy and reluctant step should be pursued without reference to it. Pitt opposes Yorke's Bill on Friday. Fox's motion is to come on next Monday; and to-day Lord Stafford gives notice of a similar motion for Friday se'nnight in the House of Lords. There is great reason to think that our divisions will be strong indeed on all these questions. If you should not be in town before Friday, pray do not forget to return me your proxy. . . . . .

"G."

This letter seems to me to cast a wholly new light on Lord Eldon's conduct. The vehement censures upon it by Lord Brougham and Dean Pellew, written before this letter was made public, and even then, I think, not warranted, can no longer be sustained. It was from Mr. Addington himself that the Chancellor received authority to become the channel of communication between the King and Mr. Pitt. That communication once opened, and once sanctioned by the King, could not be again arrested or laid aside unless at His Majesty's pleasure. Its propriety cannot be deemed dependent on its issue. If Mr. Addington was at the close disappointed and angry—if, as he told Mr. Abbot, he had an altercation on this subject with the Chancellor in the last Cabinet which he ever held—we may allow for his disappointment, but need not partake in his anger. We may rather concur with a judicious critic in the 'Edinburgh Review,' often supposed to be Sir George Cornewall Lewis. With a most upright spirit, such as that writer ever shows, he has given judgment as follows on the question:—"There seems no ground for Lord Brougham's view that this communication through Lord Eldon was an intrigue." [8]

On the day before Mr. Fox's intended motion, the correspondence with the Chancellor was accordingly renewed.

[8] Edinburgh Review, No. ccxvii. (Jan. 1858), p. 157. See also Lord Brougham's Historical Sketches of Statesmen, vol. i. p. 297.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Eldon.

"York Place, Sunday, April 22, 1804.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Under the present peculiar circumstances, I trust your Lordship will forgive my taking the liberty of requesting you to take charge of the enclosed letter to the King. Its object is to convey to His Majesty, as a mark of respect, a previous intimation of the sentiments which I may find it necessary to avow in Parliament, and at the same time an assurance, with respect to my own personal intentions, which I might perhaps not be justified in offering, uncalled for, under any other circumstances, but which you will see my motive for not withholding at present. I certainly feel very anxious that this letter should be put into His Majesty's hands, if it can with propriety, before the discussion of to-morrow; but having no means of forming myself any sufficient judgment on that point, my wish is to refer it entirely to your Lordship's discretion, being fully persuaded that you will feel the importance of making the communication with as little delay as the nature of the case will admit. I shall enclose my letter, unsealed, for your inspection, knowing that you will allow me, in doing so, to request that you will not communicate its contents to any one but the King himself. I am the more anxious that you should see what I have written, because I cannot think of asking you to undertake to be the bearer of a letter expressing sentiments so adverse to the Government with which you are acting, without giving you the previous opportunity of knowing in what manner those sentiments are stated.

"Believe me, &c.,

"W. PITT."

Lord Eldon to Mr. Pitt.

"Sunday night (April 22, 1804).

"My dear Sir,

"I received your letter, but not till after my interview of this day with His Majesty was concluded. . . . . And till he has had the repose of a night, and I have learnt the effect of to-morrow's proceedings on Tuesday morning, I cannot, according to my notions of duty to him, take any step which must affect him so materially as the communication of your opinions will, and ought to affect him.

"I return the enclosed to you. The language of it is conceived under the notion that the delivery of it may precede a debate, which it may not precede if that debate takes place to-morrow. If, notwithstanding this observation, you wish it should be in my hands, to act as such discretion as I may have may dictate, pray return it to me. If you wish to alter it, as that which should be delivered to His Majesty after such debate, you will probably feel a wish to vary the terms of it accordingly.

"It is impossible for me not to be aware that, in delivering any such paper to His Majesty, much may be, properly or improperly, observed upon my conduct. My judgment is that I ought to convey to His Majesty your sentiments as those of a person long in his service, and most deservedly so. . . . .

"I beg distinctly to say that the delivery of the letter admits nothing. I will give His Majesty an honest opinion for and against myself and others.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.,

"Eldon."

Mr. Pitt to Lord Eldon.

"York Place, Sunday night,
"MY DEAR LORD, April 22, 1804.

"I have no hesitation in availing myself of your permission to return into your hands my letter to the King. My wish is to leave it entirely to your discretion, whether it can be delivered before the debate to-morrow. If not, I anxiously wish that it should be known to His Majesty, in due time, that it was deposited with you, in order that it should be so delivered, if you should judge that it could with propriety.

"I am, my dear Lord, &c.,

"W. PITT."

This letter and the following ones will be found in the Appendix to this volume. The Chancellor did not place it in the King's hands until the 27th of the month.

Meanwhile the debates in both Houses had been proceeding. In the Lords, there had been, on the 19th of April, a motion by the Earl of Carlisle for certain papers respecting the war in India, which was carried against Ministers by a majority of one, the numbers being:—

Contents	31
Non-Contents	30
Majority	1

And on the same evening, upon the Second Reading of the Irish Militia Offer Bill, the Opposition mustered 49 against 77 votes. Lord Malmesbury, in his Diary, and according to the notions of that day, speaks of the

Ministers in the House of Lords as being "very nearly run."

Another and more important party motion on the State of the Nation was announced for the 30th by Lord Stafford. This was the same person whom I have mentioned as Earl Gower, and Ambassador to Paris in 1792, and who in 1803 had succeeded his father as second Marquis.

In the Commons, the next trial of strength was expected to take place on Monday, the 23rd, when Mr. Fox had given notice that he would move to refer the several Bills for the defence of the country to a Committee of the whole House,—in other words, a vote of want of confidence in Ministers. An anxious *whip* was made by both parties, and persons unconnected with either felt no little perplexity as to the course they should pursue. Thus writes Mr. Wilberforce, in his Diary, April 18, 1804:—"I am out of spirits and doubtful about the path of duty in these political battles. I cannot help regretting that Addington's temperance and conciliation should not be connected with more vigour. Lord, direct me right, and let me preserve an easy mind resigned to Thee and fixed on Thy favour!"

Mr. Fox, according to his notice, brought on his motion upon the 23rd. The debate to which it gave rise continued until four in the morning. Mr. Wilberforce, after many conscientious doubts, ended by voting on the Opposition side. "Pitt able, but too strong," says he, in his account of the speeches. But instead of giving any extracts from Pitt's address, I shall rather

here insert a full description of it, as derived from another most intelligent hearer.

Mr. Francis Horner to his father.

"MY DEAR SIR, "London, April 24, 1804.

"You will not get yesterday's newspaper, in consequence of my going down to Westminster before it arrived. I was at the door of the House by half-past eight; so that we had a pretty good seat of it, till three next morning. But we were fully rewarded. I have not read the report in the *Morning Chronicle;* but if it is no better than they have been of late, you will receive but a feeble impression of the debate. Fox's opening speech was not eloquent; on the contrary, slovenly as to manner, and languid. Probably from an express intention to restrain himself on personal topics, that he might not anticipate Pitt in this respect, he did not allude to Ministers, but confined himself to the inadequacy of the present arrangements for national defence, and the means of improving them into a permanent system by a better plan of recruiting, and by regulations for military exercises among the peasantry. All the substance of his speech was excellent. Pitt gave us both substance and manner, as a debater of the highest powers; most explicit in his declaration against Ministers, which he delivered, however, as if at last after much consideration and reluctance; but he enforced it with a good deal of grave vehement declamation in his way, and some touches of that bitter, freezing sarcasm, which everybody agrees is his most original talent, and appears indeed most natural to him. His speech was very argumentative and full of details; throughout the impression he left was—and he dis-

guised very successfully his anxiety to make this impression — that every measure Government had adopted for the national defence originated from his suggestion, which they had marred, however, by adopting them imperfectly, and carrying them still worse into execution.

. . . . . .

"One feature of the debate I must not forget—the fulsome adulation paid by Tierney and the Attorney-General to Pitt; the latter of whom said that no event would be more agreeable to the country than his return to power:—a very strange expression to use in such circumstances.

"Love to my mother and sisters, &c.

"FRA. HORNER."

In the division which ensued that evening, the numbers were:—

For Mr. Fox's motion . . .	204
Against it	256
Majority for Ministers. .	52

These numbers, which at some other periods in our history would have been celebrated as a great triumph to the Government, were in 1804, after a Ministry accustomed to large majorities, looked upon as little short of a defeat.

Nevertheless Addington hoped to maintain his ground. But only two days after his majority of 52 in the House of Commons, the attack upon him was renewed. On Wednesday the 25th, and on the Order of the day to go into Committee on the Army of Reserve

Suspension Bill, Pitt rose, and, in a speech of great eloquence and force, inveighed not only against some parts of this particular measure, but against the general system of defence pursued by Addington. Nor was he satisfied with objections merely; he further stated very clearly the general principles of the system which he desired to propose. Again did Fox speak, again did Wilberforce vote upon the same side; and, in the division which followed, the Ministerial majority dwindled from 52 to 37, the numbers being:—

For the motion	240
Against it	203
Majority for Ministers .	37

In this last division, and in that upon the 23rd, it is noted by Speaker Abbot, in his Diary, that Fox's friends showed themselves very doubtful of deriving any personal benefit from their co-operation with Pitt. Mr. Courtenay said: "We are the pioneers digging the foundations, but Mr. Pitt will be the architect to build the house, and to inhabit it." But considerations thus merely selfish did not sway Mr. Fox himself.

Next morning, the 26th, Addington reviewed his whole position. He looked back to his diminishing majorities in the House of Commons; he looked forward to a similar result, or perhaps even to a defeat, on the closely impending motion of the Marquis of Stafford in the House of Lords. Upon the whole case, he came to the resolution to resign. That same afternoon

he sought an audience of the King, and stated to His Majesty the decision at which he had arrived. The King received the news with great concern and great reluctance. He offered to Addington to dissolve the Parliament and appeal to the people, or to take any other course which his Minister could suggest for his maintenance in power. A few days later, when admitting the resignation as inevitable, His Majesty expressed an anxious wish to create him Earl of Banbury and Viscount Wallingford, and to settle an adequate pension both on himself and Mrs. Addington. With a high sense of public duty, and most commendable personal disinterestedness, Addington respectfully declined to avail himself of any of these favours.

Addington did not, however, notify his purpose to his colleagues until late in the evening of Sunday the 29th. Then a Cabinet being held, the resolution of resigning was officially taken and declared.

On that same Sunday the correspondence between the Chancellor and Mr. Pitt had been continued. The Chancellor wrote first to propose a personal interview, and Mr. Pitt had thus replied:—

"York Place, Sunday, April 29, 1804.

"My dear Lord,

"I am very much obliged to you for your letter, and must feel great satisfaction in learning the manner in which the assurances contained in my letter were received. I shall be at home till half-past two to-day, and afterwards from five to six, and any time before six to-morrow, if you should find occasion to call here; or if you prefer seeing me at any other hour, or at your

house, you will have the goodness to let me know, and I shall be at your commands.

"Sincerely and faithfully yours,

"W. PITT."

In the forenoon of Monday the 30th, the Lord Chancellor called upon Mr. Pitt, by the King's orders, to inform him of Mr. Addington's impending resignation, and of His Majesty's desire to receive from Mr. Pitt, in writing, the plan of a new administration.

At the meeting of the House of Lords that evening, and in anticipation of the Marquis of Stafford, Lord Hawkesbury, one of the Secretaries of State, rose and said that "he had reasons of the highest and most weighty importance which induced him to request the noble Marquis to postpone his motion." With that request, after some discussion, Lord Stafford complied, and the House adjourned.

In the House of Commons, the same evening, Addington brought forward the Budget for the year; following, in that respect, the precedent of Pitt, who, in 1801, had also brought forward his Budget after he had tendered his resignation. "Addington did it well," says Lord Malmesbury; "sixteen millions loan, and seven millions new taxes." When the Minister concluded his speech and sat down, a question of Mr. Fox elicited from him some expressions similar to those which Lord Hawkesbury had already used in the House of Lords. His language might be vague, but his meaning was well understood; and the House, at his suggestion, readily agreed to postpone all disputed points before them.

In this and in some of the preceding chapters I have traced the course of Mr. Pitt from the hour when he left the Cabinet to the hour when once again he stood upon its threshold. Within a recent date a whole flood of light has been poured upon his conduct during these three years. His views all through that time are laid bare in abundant and authentic records. His most familiar letters have been carefully preserved, his most secret conferences have been minutely noted down, and both have been sent to press without stint or reserve of any kind. No statesman perhaps was ever yet exposed to so searching an ordeal. Had he, in these years out of office, dipped into any intrigue unworthy of the public eye, and intended for lasting concealment, his very celebrity would here have turned against his fame. But, on the contrary, as it appears to me, his career, even when thus closely pried into, stands forth unsullied and pure. In every transaction of the period, he will be found, as I conceive, to combine a lofty regard for the public interests with a nice sense of personal honour. Nay, I will even venture to assert that the various charges which have formerly been brought against him in referring to this time, can only be sustained on imperfect information, and will be found to wane and fade away in exact proportion as more light is brought to bear upon them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

1804.

Pitt's views respecting a new administration transmitted to the King — His Majesty's letter to Pitt — Pitt's reply — His interview with the King — Pitt undertakes the formation of a new Government, excluding Fox — Communications to other party chiefs — Fox's generous course — Lord Grenville's negative answer — Pitt receives the Seals — The new Cabinet — Other changes of office — Precarious state of the King's health.

ON the 2nd of May Mr. Pitt, in conformity with the King's commands, transmitted to His Majesty his views respecting a new administration. The form which he adopted was a letter to the Chancellor. It will be found in the Appendix to this volume. It pointed out in the strongest terms the advantages, both to England and to Europe, that would ensue from a strong and comprehensive Government, mentioning especially the names of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox; and it was accompanied by the following private note:—

Mr. Pitt to Lord Eldon.

"York Place, Wednesday, May 2, 1804,

"MY DEAR LORD, ¾ past 1, P.M.

"I enclose a letter addressed to you, which I shall be much obliged to you if you will lay before His

Majesty. I am sorry not to have been able to make it shorter, or to send it you sooner. As I think it may probably find you at the Court of Chancery, I will, at the same time that I send it, ride down to Mr. Rose's, at Palace Yard, in order that I may be easily within your reach, if anything should arise on which you may wish to see me before you go to the Queen's House. If you should not be at the Court of Chancery, I shall order my letter to be carried to your house, unless my servant should learn where it can be delivered to you sooner.

"Ever, my dear Lord, &c.,

"W. PITT."

The written representation of Mr. Pitt for a strong and comprehensive Government was most distasteful to George the Third, and not less so to Lord Eldon. His Majesty's answer, at full length, was returned on the 5th of May. The great harshness and exasperation which it displays throughout are best explained or best excused by his recent malady. To his former Minister he shows no part of his former regard. To Lord Grenville, and also to Lord Melville, he gives a sharp touch in passing; and he then proceeds to deal blows on Mr. Fox, expressing his astonishment that, after what had passed, such a name should even be brought before him. He declares that unless Mr. Pitt will relinquish his idea of concert with Mr. Fox, and also with Lord Grenville, Mr. Pitt cannot be trusted to form a new administration. Finally, he seems to refuse, since he fails to notice, the request which Mr. Pitt had preferred for a personal interview.

But His Majesty's sentiments are perhaps still more

clearly shown in a private note which he on the same day addressed to the Chancellor:—

"May 5, 1804.

"The King is much pleased with *his* excellent Chancellor's note: he doubts much whether Mr. Pitt will, after weighing the contents of the paper delivered this day to him by Lord Eldon, choose to have a personal interview with His Majesty; but whether he will not rather prepare another essay, containing as many empty words and little information as the one he had before transmitted.

"His Majesty will, with great pleasure, receive the Lord Chancellor to-morrow, between ten and eleven, the time he himself proposed. "GEORGE R."

Mr. Pitt could not fail to be grieved and hurt by the letter which the King had sent him. But his reply on the 6th is marked by forbearance and dignity; forbearance due to his Sovereign after his late affliction —dignity derived from his own character and services. He shortly adverted to each of the points which the King had raised, and respectfully renewed his application for an audience. If this were not granted, he wrote, "I am grieved to say that I cannot retain any hope that my feeble services can be employed in any manner advantageous to your Majesty's affairs."

All this time Mr. Pitt, to nearly all his friends, maintained, as was his duty, a strict reserve. Lord Malmesbury observes in his Diary: "The only proof I could collect this week of Pitt's opinion, was from his telling Fitz-Harris, who dined with him on the 3rd of May at Lord Carrington's, that he would not be wanted

in the House, and might go to take charge of his regiment (the 2nd Wilts Militia), which was to be inspected very soon."

The last letter of Mr. Pitt, and the renewed representations of Lord Eldon, wrought favourably with the King. He consented to see Mr. Pitt, and sent him a message accordingly, on the morning of the 7th of May. The Chancellor, who conveyed the message, describes himself as much offended by a very natural inquiry, which, from a knowledge of his views in politics, Mr. Pitt addressed to him. Here is his own account, derived from his Anecdote-Book:—

"When Mr. Addington went out of office, and Mr. Pitt succeeded him, the King was just recovered from mental indisposition. He ordered me to go to Mr. Pitt with his commands for Mr. Pitt to attend him. I went to him, to Baker Street or York Place, to deliver those commands. I found him at breakfast. After some little conversation he said, as the King was pleased to command his attendance with a view of forming a new administration, he hoped I had not given any turn to the King's mind which could affect any proposition he might have to make to His Majesty upon that subject. I was extremely hurt by this. I assured him I had not; that I considered myself as a gentleman bringing to a gentleman a message from a King; and that I should have acted more unworthily than I believed myself capable of acting, if I had given any opinion upon what might be right to His Majesty."[1]

[1] Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 447.

When, in writing his Anecdotes many years later, Lord Eldon described himself as so deeply wounded by this question, he must surely have forgotten that in his letter to Mr. Pitt of April 22, he had expressly announced his intention to offer to the King his advice "for and against myself and others."

Moreover, although Lord Eldon, in this passage, declares himself to have been greatly displeased, it is certain that at the time his attachment to Mr. Pitt, and his zeal for the new arrangement, continued unabated.

From York Place the Chancellor and Mr. Pitt went, in the Chancellor's carriage, to Buckingham House. When they arrived there Pitt asked him, "Are you sure His Majesty is well enough to see me?" Lord Eldon insisted, this doubt having once been expressed, that Mr. Pitt should, in the first place, speak to the physicians alone in an adjoining room, since it was then their usual hour of calling, and since, as it chanced, they were already come. Mr. Pitt went to them accordingly, and remained absent, as the Chancellor states, a considerable time. When he came back, he declared that he was quite satisfied with their report. "But I had heard," he said, "only yesterday, on what I thought unquestionable authority, that you had never seen the King but in the presence of the Doctors. This was news which came from Carlton House, and which, as I now learn, is utterly devoid of truth."

Mr. Pitt, it seems, had asked the physicians whether, since the King had not seen him for three years, the first meeting, after such an interval, and especially with such grave business before them, might tend to disturb

or unsettle His Majesty's mind. The physicians assured him it would not. But Pitt was not content with only a verbal reply. He put his queries on paper, and desired the physicians to write their opinions beneath and sign them, which they did accordingly. "If," said Pitt to them, "you had at all demurred, I certainly would have returned without going in."[2]

It is no doubt a most curious fact, as here alleged, that Mr. Pitt had not seen His Majesty for three years. So it was stated by Lord St. Helen's, both to Lord Malmesbury and to Mr. Abbot.[3] Here, however, we must understand "to see" in the sense of "to converse with," since Pitt had from time to time paid his respects to the King at the Birthday or the Drawing Room. Sometimes they also crossed in riding. Thus I find noted in a private letter of June, 1803, "that two days before, the King had chanced to meet Mr. Pitt in Hyde Park, and had passed him by without notice."[4]

When Mr. Pitt took leave of the physicians, he was next introduced to the King; the Lord Chancellor all this time remaining in the ante-chamber.

The interview between the King and Mr. Pitt continued during full three hours. Pitt, on the next day, gave to Rose some particulars of this long conversation. He declared that the King had received him with the

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[2] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 303.

[3] This passage is given by Dean Pellew from Mr. Abbot's original MS. in his Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. ii. p. 286. But, strange to say, it does not appear in the complete Diary which the present Lord Colchester has published. See the other corresponding entries at vol. i. p. 507.

[4] Memoirs of Francis Horner, vol. i. p. 230.

utmost possible kindness and cordiality. "I must congratulate your Majesty," said Pitt, "on your looking better now than on your recovery from your last illness," alluding to the spring of 1801. "That is not to be wondered at," answered His Majesty. "I was then on the point of parting with an old friend; I am now about to regain one."[5] Seldom has any Sovereign paid a more graceful compliment to any subject.

The King and Mr. Pitt then passed on to discuss the terms of a new Ministry. In the course of this long conversation, said Mr. Pitt, the King digressed a good deal whenever he came to suggestions of Mr. Pitt which he did not like. But he was always most perfectly rational, and returned to the suggestions exactly at the parts from which he had gone off. Mr. Pitt used his most strenuous endeavours to convince his Sovereign of the necessity at that crisis to lay aside past grounds of resentment, and to form against the common enemy a strong and united administration. He pressed the point again and again, as he said to Rose, and with all the reasons he could find. Nor did Pitt entirely fail. His Majesty consented to admit the Grenvilles. His Majesty consented to admit any friends of Fox. But as to Fox personally, the result was such as the King himself described in a note addressed on the 9th to Mr. Addington:—"Mr. Fox is excluded by the express command of the King to Mr. Pitt."

When, at the close of this long interview, Mr. Pitt at last came out, he found the Chancellor still waiting,

[5] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 121.

and related to his Lordship what had passed. However disappointed he might feel at the King's resolute determination, he declared himself quite satisfied, and even surprised, with the King's state of mind. "Never," he said, "in any conversation I have had with him in my life has he so baffled me."

The persistence of the King against the advice of his new Prime Minister may, however, on one point be in some measure defended. He complained of the great Whig statesman, not merely as a Sovereign, but as a father. To the example of Fox he imputed both the lavish waste and the loose amours of the Prince of Wales. To the precepts of Fox he imputed the Prince's politics, so directly in opposition to the King's. Every act of filial disrespect or disobedience in His Royal Highness was, however unjustly, traced to one and the same source. No wonder then if George the Third felt most unwilling to bestow on Mr. Fox any share in his innermost confidence and counsels.

It was to this share in his counsels that the King's resistance was, it seems, confined. When at this interview of the 7th, Mr. Pitt found the King quite immovable on that point, and steadily refusing to accept Mr. Fox as one of his Ministers, Mr. Pitt then asked His Majesty whether he would object to Mr. Fox being employed abroad, if by any possibility he should offer himself for a foreign Mission on any occasion that might appear to him worthy to engage in. To this the King's answer was, "Not at all." He limited his objections solely to the bringing Mr. Fox into the Cabinet.

Mr. Pitt, finding his Sovereign thus resolute, and knowing on how frail a tenure his mental health at that time depended, consented, according to his previous purpose, to give way. He undertook to form a Government even with this exclusion. On leaving the King, he immediately sent Mr. Canning to Lord Grenville, and Lord Granville Leveson to Mr. Fox, to acquaint them with what had passed. Lord Grenville received the communication coldly. He said at once that if Fox was excluded, he did not think that he could take office,[6] but desired before he gave a final answer to consult his friends, whom he would summon to meet that same evening at Camelford House. Later in the afternoon Pitt called upon his cousin, and in full detail explained his case.

Mr. Fox, on whom Mr. Pitt had no personal claim whatever, showed on public grounds a lofty and generous spirit. On the preceding day he had left a note at the house of Mr. Thomas Grenville, stating, as Mr. Canning related it to Lord Malmesbury, "he wished it should appear as a record, and be known, that he stood in the way of no arrangement; that he was sure the King would exclude him; but that this ought not on any account to prevent the Grenvilles from coming in, and that as far as his influence went, it should not prevent his own friends." To Lord Granville Leveson he expressed no disappointment, no anger, no surprise. He said, "I am myself too old to care now about office, but I have many friends who for years have followed

[6] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 321.

me. I shall advise them now to join Government, and I trust Pitt can give them places."

This answer being without delay brought back to Mr. Pitt, he expressed, and with good reason, great pleasure at Mr. Fox's conduct. He immediately desired Lord Granville Leveson to return and say how ready he was to comply with Mr. Fox's wishes for his friends, and that he hoped to see him the next morning. To the interview thus proposed Mr. Fox readily agreed. But meanwhile his friends in Parliament, headed by Mr. Grey, had decided to hold a meeting that same evening at Carlton House. There they came to an unanimous decision that whatever might be Mr. Fox's wishes, they would not accept his highminded self-denial, nor agree to take office without their chief. Exactly similar to this was the decision at Camelford House. Lord Grenville proposed to the politicians there assembled to maintain the comprehensive principle, and to refuse to take part in any Government from which Mr. Fox must be excluded. In this view he was followed by Mr. Windham, by Lord Spencer, and by all the rest who owned him as their leader.

Here is an extract from Mr. Rose's Diary next day: "May 8, 1804. Found the Bishop of Lincoln with Mr. Pitt. In talking over occurrences and probable events, Mr. Pitt seemed in the highest possible spirits; neither he nor the Bishop nor myself knowing anything then of the resolutions or proceedings of the meetings at Camelford House or Carlton House; but an impression on the minds of each of us that so fair an opening presented itself for Fox as to afford a reasonable cer-

tainty that he would not allow it to escape him. . . . . All our hopes and expectations were, however, soon destroyed by Mr. Canning coming in to announce the resolutions of the preceding evening, and to say that in consequence of these Mr. Fox declined a meeting with Mr. Pitt as useless. . . . . Lord Grenville wrote to Mr. Pitt to announce to him what was decided at the meeting at his house, and to put an end to all possibility of any further expectation of his Lordship."

Thus on both sides, right and left—by Lord Grenville no less than by Mr. Fox—the power of choice to Mr. Pitt was greatly narrowed. Thenceforth he could only form his administration from two classes of persons —from among his own personal adherents, or from those who had already held office under Mr. Addington. It was a great loss, a heavy disappointment to him. Of Mr. Fox he had no complaint to make. But considering his own intimate connexion with Lord Grenville—a connexion of family, of friendship, and of office—he thought himself aggrieved. "I recollect," says Lord Eldon, in a fragment which Mr. Twiss has preserved—"I recollect Mr. Pitt saying with some indignation, he would teach that proud man that, in the service and with the confidence of the King, he could do without him, though he thought his health such that it might cost him his life."

Meanwhile the correspondence with the Chancellor continued, and there was another audience of the King.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Eldon.

"York Place, Tuesday, May 8, 1804.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I shall be much obliged to you if you can send me a single line to let me know what accounts you have from the Queen's House this morning. I shall be very desirous of seeing you in the course of the day, and will endeavour either to find you near the House of Lords between four and five, or will call on you in the evening. It will probably be desirable that I should see the King again to-morrow.

"Ever, my dear Lord, &c.,

"W. P."

"York Place, Wednesday night,

"MY DEAR LORD, May 9, 1804.

"I have had another interview to-day, not quite, I am sorry to say, so satisfactory as that of Monday. I do not think there was anything positively wrong, but there was a hurry of spirits, and an excessive love of talking, which showed that either the airing of this morning, or the seeing of so many persons, and conversing so much during these three days, has rather tended to disturb. The only inference I draw from this observation is, that too much caution cannot be used in still keeping exertion of all sorts, and particularly conversation, within reasonable limits. If that caution can be sufficiently adhered to, I have no doubt that everything will go well; and there is certainly nothing in what I have observed that would, in the smallest degree, justify postponing any of the steps that are in progress towards arrangement. I am, therefore, to attend again to-morrow, for the purpose of receiving the Seals, which Mr. Addington will have received

notice from His Majesty to bring. If I should not meet you there, I will endeavour to see you afterwards at the House of Lords.

"I am, my dear Lord, &c.,

"W. PITT."

In accordance with the expectation expressed in this letter, the Seals of office were on the following morning, the 10th of May, brought back by Mr. Addington to the King, and delivered by His Majesty to Mr. Pitt. That same day the new Writ for the University of Cambridge, rendered necessary by his return to office, was moved in the House of Commons by Mr. Long.

During these arrangements Lord Melville, who had some time since arrived from Scotland, was in frequent and friendly communication with Mr. Pitt. The following note refers to a suggestion which had verbally passed between them:—

Mr. Pitt to Lord Melville.

"York Place, Friday night,
May 10, 1804.

"DEAR LORD MELVILLE,

"On reflecting on the whole subject this evening, I doubt much the utility and propriety of sending to Lord Moira, and will beg you to suspend it till after we meet to-morrow.

"Ever yours,

"W. P."

I have found in Mr. Pitt's handwriting a sketch, as it seems, of the combined administration which he had wished to form. It is as follows:—

"Treasury	Mr. Pitt.
Secretaries of State	Lord Melville. Mr. Fox. Lord Fitzwilliam.
Admiralty	Lord Spencer.
Lord President	Lord Grenville.
Privy Seal	Duke of Portland.
Lord Chancellor	Lord Eldon.
Master-General of Ordnance ..	Lord Chatham.
Chancellor of Duchy	Mr. Windham.
Board of Control	Lord Castlereagh.
Lord Steward	Lord Camden.
Committee of Trade	Lord Harrowby.
Secretary at War	Mr. Grey.
Secretary to Ireland	Mr. Canning."

The conduct of Mr. Pitt in this transaction has even in our own times been assailed on two opposite grounds. Some persons have blamed him for ever proposing Mr. Fox as one of his Cabinet colleagues. Other persons have blamed him for not at all hazards persisting in that proposal, and making it a *sine quâ non* condition with the King.

As regards the first of these charges, I know not that I have anything to add to the arguments so clearly stated by Pitt himself, in his letter of the 2nd of May. At a time when it was sought to combine all parties to resist the apprehended invasion, and to form new alliances abroad, it was surely of no light moment to fortify the Government with a statesman of Fox's genius and renown. For such an object it was wise, it was patriotic, to cast aside as unworthy the occasion all remembrance of past animosity and party discord. The coalition of 1804, had it been effected, would have

differed in all respects from the coalition of 1783. In 1783 the country was at the close of a war. National defence was no longer at issue, and questions of home policy would claim and would deserve the foremost place. A junction between Fox and North, who on all these questions were wide asunder, was therefore most rightfully condemned. But in 1804 it was just the reverse. The country was at the beginning of a war. National defence was then the paramount consideration, and other grounds of difference might be, not indeed relinquished, but postponed. Who would desire to wrangle about Reform in Parliament or to nibble at the Treason and Sedition Bills when Bonaparte, with a hundred thousand of the best troops of Europe, was encamped at Boulogne?

The second of these charges is stated by Lord Macaulay with his usual force and perspicuity. He owns that Pitt did his best to overcome the scruples of the King. "That he was perfectly sincere," adds Lord Macaulay, "there can be no doubt. But it was not enough to be sincere; he should have been resolute. Had he declared himself determined not to take office without Fox, the Royal obstinacy would have given way, as it gave way a few months later, when opposed to the immutable resolution of Lord Grenville." [7]

To me, on the contrary, it appears that on full consideration of the circumstances there is no real parity between the case of Pitt in May, 1804, and the case of Lord Grenville in January, 1806. In 1804 the King

[7] Biographies, p. 223, ed. 1860.

was fully determined rather than yield Fox's admission to fall back on Addington's Government. Nor was this a mere visionary scheme. It must be remembered that Addington had not been outvoted, but only close-run. It was not impossible, it was only very difficult, for that Cabinet to continue in office; and that difficulty would have been much lessened by the news that Pitt had failed in adjusting matters with the King. People would have said that after all they must have some Government, and that if Pitt's could not be framed, they had best make up their mind to Addington's.

In January, 1806, on the other hand, the Pitt party was broken down by the death of its chief. When questioned by the King, through Lord Hawkesbury, it declared itself wholly unable to carry on the Government. Addington was become a Peer. Perceval had not yet risen from legal to political eminence. There was not left a single statesman in the House of Commons to whom the King could apply if he rejected the terms of Grenville. He had, therefore, no choice. He could make no resistance; nor did he, in truth, attempt any. When in their first interview Lord Grenville frankly told him that he must have Mr. Fox for his principal colleague, His Majesty did not offer one word of objection, but said at once: "I understood it so; and I meant it so."

It seems to me moreover that in considering Pitt's conduct at this juncture, the state of the King's health is to be borne in mind. This was not, as Pitt's opponents have alleged, a mere point of personal feeling—though even thus it would need no apology in one who had

been the confidential servant of his Sovereign for a period of seventeen years. But was it a light risk, at a time especially when a French invasion was preparing, to take any course that might render necessary the discussion of a Bill of Regency, and the transfer of Royal authority to other hands?

It seems a little doubtful, although the doubt did not in any manner weigh with Pitt, whether, if the King's aversion had been overcome, and the offer had been made, Fox would after all have accepted office. Pitt was fully determined to be himself First Lord of the Treasury and Prime Minister. He had taken care that there should be no misunderstanding upon that point. He had taken care, as we have seen in his letter of March the 29th, to state his determination to Lord Melville, and through Lord Melville to Lord Moira and the Prince of Wales. For Fox he designed the post of Foreign Secretary, a post especially adapted to Fox's tastes and talents. But, on the other hand, Fox most expressly declared on several occasions—both before the period of May, 1804, and subsequently to it—his strong unwillingness to come in with Pitt at the head of the Government, and his desire first to see some other person—he cared little whom—in that place.

Independently of this general view of politics in Fox's mind, it should be noted that he retained the utmost bitterness of feeling against his ancient rival. That bitterness was not at all diminished even in the few months preceding May, 1804, when their general course was the same, and their votes on many questions coincided. In that period the familiar letters of Fox are

full of opprobrious terms. Writing to Grey, he calls Pitt "a mean, low-minded dog." Writing to Fitzpatrick, he says of the same: "He is a mean rascal after all, and you who have sometimes supposed him to be high-minded were quite wrong."[a] How different, how very different, I may say, in passing, was the tone of Pitt to Fox! I doubt whether in the whole course of Pitt's most private correspondence there can be found a single expression about Fox inconsistent with the personal respect which eminent men owe to one another.

But if even we doubt whether the junction with Fox at this time could have been effected, it does not follow that the offer would have been of small importance. The offer, though declined, would have released both his own followers and those of Lord Grenville from their supposed point of honour. Able men among them would no longer have been found unwilling to take part in Pitt's administration.

I must also observe that in first proposing Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt had deliberately hazarded the serious displeasure, not only of the King, but of very many among his own followers and partisans. This is related in Mr. Abbot's Diary. This is avowed in Lord Eldon's Correspondence. But most striking of all is the testimony on this point, and on several others, of a statesman who had been in Mr. Addington's Cabinet, and who remained in Mr. Pitt's. I am referring to a private letter from Lord Castlereagh as President of the Board of Control

[a] Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, vol. iii. pp. 440 and 455.

to Lord Wellesley as Governor-General of India. That letter has been already published in the Wellesley Despatches,[9] but merged as it is in huge masses of Indian documents, it has hitherto, I think, attracted little notice. I shall, therefore, at this place reproduce it.

Lord Castlereagh to the Marquis Wellesley.

"MY DEAR LORD, "London, May 18, 1804.

. . . . . .

"I shall not attempt to trace the various causes which at first by slow degrees, and latterly by rapid strides, produced so afflicting a change in the reciprocal feelings of former friends; your Lordship's sentiments of attachment to them all, will best enable you to appreciate what those suffered who had a public duty to perform in this trying struggle. It is enough to remark, that on the meeting of Parliament after the Recess, the measures of Government were attacked on two or three questions, on which the united force of Mr. Pitt's, Mr. Fox's, and Lord Grenville's friends, was concentrated. In the Commons the majority of Government was materially reduced, whilst the minority exceeded 200. In the Lords the strength of those who would have divided against Government, on Lord Stafford's motion, was even more seriously formidable, considering the usual temper of this assembly.

"Under these circumstances His Majesty's Ministers, dubious how long they might be enabled to retain a majority in Parliament, and under a strong conviction that against such a combination of numbers, talent, and

[9] See vol. iii. p. 570, ed. 1837.

connexion, it was no longer to be expected that they could continue to administer the Government with that energy and effect which the public interests at such a moment required, were of opinion they should best discharge their duty by availing themselves of the first occasion which the King's recovery afforded them, of advising His Majesty to form an administration; they were desirous of giving every facility; whilst they were ready, if His Majesty met with insuperable difficulties in the formation of such an arrangement as he could reconcile to his own mind, to continue their best exertions in discharge of their public duty.

"This advice was certainly offered in the confident hope that the King would turn his attention to Mr. Pitt; this expectation was not disappointed, and the Lord Chancellor was desired by the King to learn Mr. Pitt's sentiments upon the formation of a new Government. Mr. Pitt, under the present circumstances of the empire, considered it as his duty to bring under the King's consideration the expediency of forming an arrangement which should embrace the leading men of all parties, as best calculated to keep down factious discussions during the war, and to afford the King the repose and tranquillity so essential to his health. It is unnecessary for me to offer any remarks upon the merits or defects of such a plan, whatever might have been the consequences, had it been carried into effect: it is enough to know that Mr. Pitt proposed it, to be assured that in his conscientious judgment it appeared to him the best adapted under all the circumstances to promote the public service. In a personal interview with the King of three hours, he pressed the proposition upon His Majesty's most serious attention; the result was, an acquiescence on the part of the King in the leading men of all parties (Mr. Fox excepted) being included.

"Upon this being made known, Mr. Fox urged his friends to lend themselves to the arrangement; this they declined, unless he was also to hold office; and upon Lord Grenville, Lord Spencer, and Mr. Windham being applied to by Mr. Pitt, they also refused to accept of office if Mr. Fox was to be proscribed. Mr. Pitt having made every effort in the hope of disarming hostility to the King's Government, certainly having gone much greater lengths than was congenial to the feelings and sentiments of a large portion of the public and of many of his best friends; when he was thus disappointed of the aid of those whose services he was anxious to procure for the public, in consequence of a decision on the part of the King, which it was strictly competent and constitutional for him to form, did not a moment hesitate in proceeding to submit to His Majesty the best arrangement for the administration of his affairs which his means of selection thus narrowed would afford. I transmit to your Lordship the appointments as far as they have hitherto gone; and if some most distinguished names of Mr. Pitt's former connexions, not by his, but by their own act, are absent from the list, your Lordship will discover no presumable seeds of internal discord in the Cabinet which can thwart or impede the full exercise of Mr. Pitt's powers. The Government will probably have to contend with a very serious opposition, countenanced by high authority, and comprehending great ability and considerable strength. If Mr. Pitt's health does not fail him, it will, I am confident, only rouse him to greater and more successful exertions. It is to be seriously lamented that wounded feelings and other causes have deprived the King at this critical moment of the united services of all those who in the last twelve years preserved the country, exposed as it has been to unexampled dangers,

and it is painful to observe Mr. Addington and several valuable men withdrawn from the King's service: we must, however, trust to time for bringing back feelings and sentiments between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Addington to their former state of relation; and I believe at this moment it is the only thing really wanting to the King's complete personal satisfaction.

"I am, my dear Lord, &c.,

"CASTLEREAGH."

The reader will not fail to observe the ominous doubt which here in one passage Lord Castlereagh expresses: "If Mr. Pitt's health does not fail him." His health, indeed, was already impaired, and was now to be exposed to no ordinary trial. He was to confront night after night the united phalanx of the Foxites and the Grenvillites, comprising several of his former colleagues. Against such an array it might be questionable how long his bodily powers would endure. That doubt was certainly another strong argument in favour of a junction with Fox. But it was an argument which Pitt, with his lofty spirit, did not seek to urge. Not one word tending to that point appears to have escaped him at that period in any of his representations to the King. How happy had it occurred to the King himself, and found weight in His Majesty's mind!

The difficulties of Pitt at this juncture were much increased by the unexpected use that was made of Lord Grenville's letter to him of the 8th of May. That letter, besides expressing Lord Grenville's own refusal to come in without Fox, contained an able argument for the union of chief men from all parties—"an object," adds

the letter, "for which the circumstances of the time afford at once so strong an inducement and so favourable an occasion." To Pitt's surprise and regret this private communication, commencing "My dear Pitt," and ending "Most affectionately yours," was published in the newspapers, and became the manifesto of the new Opposition.[1] It was a weapon which Pitt could not readily meet with another of the same kind, unless he had brought forward into public view the personal wishes and feelings of the King.

Lord Grenville, in the first instance, may have given copies of this letter to several of his own and Fox's friends; and there is reason to believe that it was made public without his knowledge or authority. Certain it is that he had no desire to break with Pitt. On the contrary, he availed himself of another transaction, at nearly the same period, to express his continued feelings of personal regard. But this opportunity will require a short detail.

In 1754 and the following years, Thomas Pitt, afterwards the first Lord Camelford, was an undergraduate at Cambridge. There he received a series of letters from his uncle, afterwards the first Lord Chatham, to guide and direct his studies. Such counsels, from so great a man, were felt to have especial value. After Lord Camelford's death the manuscripts remained in possession of his widow, and on her decease passed into Lord Grenville's hands. In the opinion of that excellent

[1] The letter will be found at length in the Ann. Register for 1804, p. 124, and also in the Courts and Cabinets of George III., vol. iii. p. 352.

judge they did honour to both the parties concerned, and would be of interest to the world at large. He proposed to publish them if Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt did not object. Lord Chatham approved the idea, as Mr. Pitt did also. Lord Grenville accordingly prepared this little volume for the press, and prefixed to it a few most graceful lines of dedication.

To the Right Hon. W. Pitt.

"My dear Sir, "Dropmore, Dec. 3, 1803.

"When you expressed to me your entire concurrence in my wish to print the following letters, you were not apprised that this address would accompany them. By you it will, I trust, be received as a testimony of affectionate friendship. To others the propriety will be obvious of inscribing with your name a publication in which Lord Chatham teaches how great talents may most successfully be cultivated, and to what objects they may most honourably be directed.

"Grenville."

But though the volume was sent to the press in December, 1803, it was not completed by the printers until the middle of May ensuing. Then one of the first copies was sent to Pitt with a note as follows:—

Lord Grenville to Mr. Pitt.

"My dear Pitt, "Camelford House, May 16, 1804.

"I send you at last the letters which you saw in manuscript last summer. Mr. Payne has taken near five months to print about a hundred pages; but I am not displeased at the delay, since it affords me the

opportunity of sending out the first page in the present circumstances, exactly as it stood in December last. I know there is no fear of your thinking that political differences (be they more or less) will alter in my mind a friendship of more than twenty years' standing; but it is satisfactory to be able to testify this feeling publicly.

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"G.

"P. S.—I send you another copy, that you may, if you think it right, take an opportunity of leaving it with the King, with such *speechification* as may be most proper on my part. These copies are on large paper, only fifty of which are printed for presents: this circumstance affords an excuse for the presumption of requesting leave to offer one to His Majesty.

"If you think this wrong, return me the copy."

It is certainly not strange if Mr. Pitt, at the very time when he was suffering from the publication of Lord Grenville's political letter, did not feel disposed to meet the next with the same entire cordiality as the writer shows. I have heard that he gave it no answer at all, and that Lord Grenville was much offended.

In a note to Lord Buckingham, written from Dropmore only a few days afterwards, we find Lord Grenville's political bias reappear. "Nothing to be sure can be more wretched than the manner in which Pitt is eking out his Government with Roses and Dundases. But this fine weather leaves one little inclination to come to town to do or say anything against it."[2]

[2] Courts and Cabinets of George III., vol. iii. p. 355.

Meanwhile, as Lord Grenville intimates, the new Ministerial appointments had been in active progress. They could only be made from the narrow scope which Pitt had deprecated. Pitt himself was of course First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of the old Cabinet Ministers six remained in their places; Lord Eldon as Chancellor, the Duke of Portland as President of the Council, the Earl of Westmorland as Privy Seal, the Earl of Chatham as Master of the Ordnance, and Lord Castlereagh as President of the Board of Control. Lord Hawkesbury was also continued as Secretary of State, but, rather to his own regret, was transferred from the Foreign Department to the Home. The new Foreign Secretary was Lord Harrowby—the same whose ready elocution and penetrating genius, whose large stores of knowledge, and whose keen—sometimes perhaps a little caustic—wit, were tried in many subsequent years of office, and were tempted at least on one occasion, but in vain, with an offer of the Premiership. Surviving as he did to an honoured and green old age, he yet lives in the attached remembrance of many survivors at the present time.

Continuing the list of Cabinet appointments, we find Viscount Melville First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Camden Secretary of State for War and Colonies, Lord Mulgrave Chancellor of the Duchy, and the Duke of Montrose President of the Board, and also joint Postmaster-General instead of Lord Auckland. The new Cabinet, therefore, consisted of twelve persons—only one besides Pitt himself, that is Lord Castlereagh, a member of the House of Commons.

In the appointments beyond the Cabinet, Pitt made one or two attempts to enlarge his sphere. He proposed an office to the second son of his old chief Shelburne. This was Lord Henry Petty, a young man of rare promise, who had come in for the borough of Calne. The offer was sent him through Mr. Long, but was declined by Lord Henry, who adhered to the party of Fox. It was a refusal of which the consequences extended far beyond the time in question. How greatly in after years would the party of Pitt have gained, could they have reckoned among their leaders the present Marquis of Lansdowne!

There was also a trial of Tierney. In the debate of April 23 he had paid, as we have seen, extraordinary court to Pitt, and had seemed ambitious of his favour. The sequel is told us in Mr. Rose's Diary:—"May 14, 1804. Mr. Tierney had the offer of remaining as Treasurer of the Navy; he certainly thought Carlton House the better speculation."

Here is another offer and another refusal, but on entirely different grounds. "Pitt has offered the Mint to Lord Bathurst, who in the handsomest way begs Pitt to bestow it where it may be more useful to the purposes of his Government; that *he* shall ever act with him; and that he really feels such a very high office is one he is by no means entitled to." So writes Lord Malmesbury. But Pitt, after an interval of time, renewed his proposal, and Lord Bathurst was named.

As finally settled, the principal appointments were as follows:—Canning became Treasurer of the Navy in the place of Tierney. William Dundas, a nephew of

Lord Melville, became Secretary at War, in the place of Bragge. The joint Paymasters of the Forces were Rose and Lord Charles Somerset, in the place of Hiley Addington and Steele; for Steele, it is to be observed, had of late grown to be at variance with his early friend. The two Secretaries of the Treasury were Huskisson and Sturges Bourne, in the place of Vansittart and Sargent.

The Government of Ireland was left for the present as it stood, except as to the Secretary, Wickham, who retired on account of ill health, and was succeeded by Sir Evan Nepean. Nor was there any change in the Law departments of either country.

It was on the 11th that Mr. Perceval received, through Lord Harrowby, the proposal to continue Attorney-General. Before he would accept he required a distinct assurance upon several points, and above all, that Mr. Fox was to be no part of the administration. On this point he was answered, says Mr. Abbot, "that Mr. Fox was certainly not a member of the new administration, but there was no undertaking that he never would be; and on this the Attorney-General closed, distinctly stating that therefore his own acceptance must be as conditional as was the offer."[3]

Canning also had his doubts and scruples. He did not indeed aspire to any of the highest posts. "For myself," he said to Lord Malmesbury, "I had rather take no office at all. As to a Cabinet office, I think that my taking one would be injurious both to my-

[3] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 512.

self and Pitt. To myself because the public would evidently look upon me as not yet ripe for it; to Pitt because the same public would consider it as a mark of partiality and personal favour. Against this, therefore, I protest." Finally, as we have seen, Canning became Treasurer of the Navy; but he greatly lamented the exclusion of Fox and Grenville from the public service, and condemned the admission into the Cabinet of Mulgrave and Montrose.

As his Private Secretary, the new Prime Minister named Mr. William Dacres Adams, son of one of the members for Totness. The choice of Mr. Adams was made on the recommendation of Mr. Long, and was fully justified by his ability and attachment to the end of his chief's career. Mr. Adams was afterwards Private Secretary to the Duke of Portland; he has filled several other official posts; and he is still living in retirement at his seat near Sydenham. To his kindness I owe the communication of many interesting particulars and important manuscripts.

There were also at this time divers changes in the Royal Household, which it is not very necessary to examine in detail. The Earl of Dartmouth succeeded the Marquis of Salisbury as Lord Chamberlain. Lord John Thynne succeeded the Right Hon. Charles Greville as Vice-Chamberlain. This Mr. Greville was a veteran who had been named to a political office, rather to the public surprise, a quarter of a century before. In 1796 some one chanced to ask Pitt how so tiresome a man had come to be a Privy Councillor. "It was by dint of solicitation, I suppose," said Pitt, in a laughing

mood. "For my own part, I would rather at any time have made him a Privy Councillor than have talked to him!"[4]

During all these days the mental state of the King continued to be a matter of anxiety. Mr. Pitt had noticed some increase of agitation in his second interview of the 10th of May; but when His Majesty found that the administration was practically forming in the manner that he wished, he was satisfied and soothed. On the 12th he told the Duke of Portland that, *now*, he and Pitt met like old friends who had never parted. "It seems certain," adds Lord Malmesbury, "that what has passed, far from hurting the King, seems to have relieved him."

On the 16th, however, the Chancellor and Pitt felt it their duty to transmit a joint representation to His Majesty, earnestly entreating him to avoid all unnecessary causes of excitement, and to comply with the rules which his physicians had enjoined. I do not find that the King made any answer to this joint request; but on the 18th, when the political arrangements were almost completed, he addressed the Chancellor as follows:—

The King to Lord Eldon.

"Queen's Palace, May 18, 1804.

"The King having signed the Commission for giving his Royal Assent, returns it to his excellent Lord Chancellor, whose conduct he most thoroughly approves. His Majesty feels the difficulties he has had, both poli-

[4] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 75.

tical and personal to the King; but the uprightness of Lord Eldon's mind, and his attachment to the King, have borne him with credit and honour, and (what the King knows will not be without its due weight) with the approbation of his Sovereign, through an unpleasant labyrinth.

"The King saw Mr. Addington yesterday. Mr. Addington spoke with his former warmth of friendship for the Lord Chancellor; he seems to require quiet, as his mind is perplexed between returning affection for Mr. Pitt, and great soreness at the contemptuous treatment he met with, the end of last Session, from one he had ever looked upon as his private friend. This makes the King resolve to keep them for some time asunder.

"GEORGE R."

In conversation with the Duke of Portland a few days later, we learn that the King called the Grenvilles "the brotherhood," and said they must always either govern despotically or oppose violently. The Duke told Lord Malmesbury that he had little doubt of the King doing well. Quiet would set him right, and nothing else. Not quite so sanguine was Mrs. Harcourt, who came to see Lord Malmesbury the next day. She said that the King was apparently quite well when speaking to his Ministers, or to those who kept him a little in awe, but that to his family and dependents his language was incoherent and harsh, quite unlike his usual character. He had made capricious changes everywhere, from the Lord Chamberlain to the grooms and footmen. He had turned away the Queen's favourite coachman, made footmen grooms, and *vice versâ;* and, what was still worse, because more notorious, had removed Lords

of the Bedchamber without a shadow of reason. All this, said Mrs. Harcourt, afflicts the Royal Family beyond measure. The Princesses are quite sinking under it.

The 27th of May, on which Lord Malmesbury wrote these last entries in his journal, supplied another proof that even a mere trifle might still throw the King's mind from off its balance. Going down to Windsor on the 26th, his carriage was followed some way, and loudly cheered, by a party of Eton boys. This had such an effect upon His Majesty, that when he met a different party of the boys next morning, he said to them, "I have always been partial to your school. I have now the additional motive of gratitude for being so. In future I shall be an anti-Westminster."

Yet Mr. Rose, from whom we derive this story, declares that when, on the 5th of June, he attended a Council to kiss the King's hand on his appointment—which was the first time he had seen His Majesty since his recovery—"the King spoke to me for about ten minutes, and I never saw him more entirely composed and collected; if anything, less hurried in his manner than usual."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

1804.

Charge against Messrs. Drake and Spencer Smith — Execution of the Duke d'Enghien — The First Consul proclaimed Emperor of the French — Pitt's projected Continental alliances — Overtures of Mr. Livingston — Pitt's Memorandum — Wilberforce's renewed motion on the Slave Trade — Proclamation prohibiting the Trade in the conquered Colonies — Pitt's Additional Force Bill — Vote of Credit — Pitt's measures of Defence — Criticisms of Lord Grenville and Fox — Napoleon's plan of Invasion — The *Catamarans* — Successful operations of the British out of Europe — Battles of Assye and Argaum — War with Spain — Seizure of the Treasure Ships — Pitt's notes on the War, Germany, and Napoleon — Attempted reconciliation between the King and the Prince of Wales — Case of Lord Auckland.

ON the 18th of May Mr. Pitt took his seat in the House of Commons, on his re-election. Keen debates and weighty business, foreign and domestic, claimed at once his care.

As regards the Continent, the rumours of immediate invasion had been rather fainter for some time past. There was reason to believe that the spirit of our people and the magnitude of our armaments had caused the enemy to pause in his designs. There was reason to believe that the name of Pitt, as restored to our national councils, would be a further earnest of our energy and resolution. Still, however, the camp at Boulogne was not raised; the flotilla of boats was not dispersed. Such considerations of the internal state of England, so far as they wrought at all with the First Consul, merely

inclined him to some more delay. Meanwhile he might consolidate his already unresisted power; meanwhile he might augment his already gigantic preparations; and meanwhile any interval of false security amongst ourselves might perhaps be seized as the fittest moment for a sudden enterprise. It therefore behoved us on no account to falter in our naval or military measures.

It may be added, that the First Consul at this very period showed an aggravation of his hostile feelings. He accused the English Government of having taken part in plots for his assassination, while in truth their object was only, as in war it might justly be, the overthrow of his authority. He allowed this grievous charge of intended assassination to be not only made, but published in two Reports to him from the *Grand Juge*, the Minister of Justice.[1] It was levelled especially against Mr. Francis Drake, Minister from England at Munich, and Mr. Spencer Smith, the Minister from England at Stuttgart. Nor did the French Government rest until, by its overweening influence with those smaller Courts, it effected the public expulsion of our diplomatic agen

In the contest as renewed with France we had been thus far single-handed. But besides the return of Pitt to power, several events which had recently occurred were tending to a renewal of concert and alliance with the great European Powers. Foremost among these events was the mournful tragedy of the Duke d'Enghien. Seized at night by a party of French soldiers on the

[1] See these documents, translated in the Annual Register, 1804, pp. 619-627.

neutral ground of Baden, the young Prince had been conveyed to the Donjon de Vincennes, tried by a Military Commission, and executed on the 21st of March before daybreak, in the castle fosse. A thrill of deep commiseration ran through all Europe at the news. "'I do not think," says M. Thiers, "that I am departing from the strictest truth if I say that this catastrophe was the main cause of a third general war."[2]

Another cause of a very different kind was the re-establishment of monarchy in France. On the 18th of May, after some preliminary steps in various quarters, and above all, a Decree of the Senate, the First Consul was solemnly proclaimed Sovereign of the French, by the title of the Emperor Napoleon. At first sight this might appear a matter concerning France alone; but the private correspondence of the period shows how greatly the change was resented in the other Continental Courts. So long as Napoleon had been the chief of a Republic, the Sovereign Princes of Europe were willing to draw, as they well might, a most favourable contrast between him and the sanguinary or incapable chiefs who had gone before him since the execution of Louis the Sixteenth. They acknowledged his genius, and they desired his good will. But when he took his place among themselves—when he sought to found a dynasty not inferior to the loftiest of their own—their pride of rank was roused, and they viewed his elevation with an enmity which only their fears concealed.

In his endeavours to frame anew a system of concert

[2] Hist. du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. v. p. 2.

with the great European Powers, Pitt was at this time most effectively aided by Lord Harrowby. That able man, who knew the value of good counsel, used often to call and talk over his business with Lord Malmesbury. He laid before the experienced diplomatist the accounts of the several Courts which his late despatches gave. "Austria," said Lord Harrowby, "is not yet recovered from her panic. Of Berlin I think rather less unfavourably than you might suppose. But Russia is the Court most likely to be brought into action. . . . On the whole, however, till the invasion is either attempted or laid aside, it is not probable the Continent will stir."

"But," said Lord Malmesbury, "if we succeed in resisting it, it is still most material to form Continental connexions and alliances, since without them Europe never can be restored to a situation of security against France."

Athwart these warlike preparations came one faint gleam of peace. Mr. Livingston, Minister from the United States to France, arrived in London. All his leanings were to Fox, all his overtures to that statesman. But Fox thought it his duty to lay before the Government the information which he had thus received. Accompanied by Grey, he called upon Pitt in Downing Street, on the 5th of June. Immediately after they had taken leave, Pitt put down in writing what had passed, for the information of his colleagues.

"*Memorandum.*

"June 5, 1804.

"The purport of the communication made me by Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey was, that Mr. Livingston had

expressed to them his opinions respecting the possibility of peace between this country and France. That he had taken particular care to disclaim having any authority or commission on the subject, but that his opinions were chiefly founded on conversations with Joseph Bonaparte some time since, and more recently with Talleyrand and Maillebois. From Joseph Bonaparte he had only collected generally that there was a disposition in the French Government to peace. From the two others he understood that the French Government would expect some arrangement about Malta, such as had been before proposed—probably its being garrisoned by Russia; and that on the point of our relinquishing it they would not give way; but that they should be ready to consent to withdrawing their troops from Switzerland and Holland, and to provide for the independence of both those countries by the guarantee of other Powers, and that guarantee as general as possible, and that they would also agree to the restoration of Hanover. That some idea had been mentioned of some guarantee in return against our making further acquisitions in India; but Mr. Fox observed that it had not been explained what Power there was that could enter into any such guarantee, and rather hinted that he imagined on that account they might not mean farther security than our assurances of a system of moderation. They added, to questions which I put, that nothing had been said with respect to providing for the security of Holland or Switzerland, by any arrangement for the defence of either in the first instance, by fortresses or auxiliary troops, or by anything beyond the guarantee suggested; but Mr. Grey stated that he understood the basis proposed was to provide for their independence, and that the mode of doing so would, he conceived, be considered as matter of subsequent discussion. They further added,

that Mr. Livingston understood that it would be expected that the first overture of a disposition to treat would be made either directly or indirectly on our part; and that they would be extremely disposed to receive it, and that the present moment (with a view to Bonaparte's new dignity) was thought a favourable one. That they had mentioned to Mr. Livingston that the detention of the English in France might be one obstacle to any such overture; and that Mr. L. had expressed a strong opinion (but merely as an opinion of his own, and not founded on his conversations) that on any indication of a favourable disposition here towards an overture, they would be glad to take the opportunity of releasing the prisoners, as their detention was generally disapproved in France.

"Mr. Fox also said that in the course of the conversation Mr. Livingston had expressed a great readiness to do anything in his power towards facilitating a negotiation, and thought himself capable of being of considerable use. Mr. Fox rather intimated a belief that the object of Mr. L. coming here was to bring about some explanation, and that it was generally supposed to be so in France; and he seemed to think that he possibly was prepared to have said more if he had found the administration here composed as he perhaps expected when he left France. I thanked Mr. Fox and Mr. Grey for the communication, without expressing any opinion on any part of it, and only informed them that I should report what they had told me to the King's Ministers.

"W. P."

"For my part," said Mr. Pitt to Rose, "I think no good consequences can result from this communication. If France had really any serious intention of putting

an end to the war, the new Emperor would have found some less exceptionable channel of communication than through a man whose hostile disposition to this country has been so strongly and so lately manifested. His public character at that Court, too, makes him an unfit instrument for the purpose."[3] The doubts of Mr. Pitt on this occasion seem to have been most justly founded. No good consequence ensued; and the overture of Mr. Livingston was only, I conceive, a *Will of the Wisp.*

Let me now revert to the "sayings and doings" in the House of Commons. No sooner was Pitt again installed in office than Wilberforce gave notice of renewing his motion on the Slave Trade. From 1792 to 1800 the cause of Abolition had lost ground. From 1800 to 1804 it had seemed to slumber. Of that retrocession the main cause had been the ferment of Revolutionary France, and the fears which ensued in England. Of that quiescence the main cause had been the hostility of the Addington Cabinet, which, on this point, as on several others, faithfully represented the feelings of the King. But besides the auspicious change from Addington to Pitt, there were now other favourable indications. Several of the West Indian merchants and planters began themselves to talk of Abolition. They were afraid of the cultivation of sugar in Demerara and the other Dutch colonies. Under this dread they signified to Wilberforce that they would no longer oppose Abolition as a trial—as a three years' or a five years' Suspension of the Trade.

[3] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 151.

Wilberforce, thus appealed to, took a moderate and highly honourable part. "I can, of course," he said, "consent to no compromise, but I shall rejoice in Africa having such a breathing-time." Accordingly, on the 30th of May he entreated the House of Commons to consider a Bill for the Abolition of the Slave Trade within a time to be limited. Addington declared that he should oppose the Bill even thus curtailed, not because he thought it unjust, but because he thought it impracticable. "If," said Pitt, "the motion were for the immediate abolition of the Slave Trade, I should have no hesitation in giving it my warmest support, because I think the first moment for abolishing that inhuman traffic would be the best. Nevertheless, I am ready to support any proposal that can bring nearer to us that desirable event. I shall feel satisfaction in any measure that tends even to a gradual abolition."

The main body of the West Indians and of the King's friends was still against Wilberforce's scheme. But on the other hand its limited scope gained it many new friends, and on a first division it was carried by 124 votes against 49.

More debates, however, and more divisions ensued on the succeeding stages. Earl Temple, the eldest nephew of Lord Grenville, took a forward part in opposing the Bill, of which Lord Grenville was to have charge whenever it reached the House of Lords. "The abolition of the Trade in Slaves," he cried, "will seal the death-warrant of every white man in the West Indies." "I say," answered Pitt, "that the death-warrant would be the continuance of the traffic. I would ask any man

who understands this subject, what he would expect to be the result of that continuance for ten years?"[4]

With every exertion on the part of Wilberforce and of his friends, the Bill did not pass the Commons until the close of June. Then the lateness of the season, and the necessity, according to the practice of the Peers, to examine evidence, afforded a strong ground for postponement. There was a debate with good speeches from Lord Hawkesbury and Lord Grenville, and an extreme one from Lord Stanhope. But there was no division. Wilberforce took the advice which was equally tendered him by Bishop Porteus, by Lord Grenville, and by Pitt. He agreed to defer the question until the following year.

Meantime it seemed to Mr. Pitt that a blow might be dealt at this abominable traffic by the mere authority of the Crown. The interposition of Parliament was not needed in the colonies which we had conquered from the Dutch. In these it might be possible to prohibit the Slave Trade simply by a Royal Proclamation. "Pitt very strong on this, and against any vote of Parliament," says Wilberforce, in his Diary of the 3rd of July. Wilberforce therefore refrained from stirring that point in the House of Commons. But from the multitude of private interests involved, the question proved less clear than was at first supposed. In November Lord Harrowby wrote to Wilberforce: "I am hardly sure that I am not a perjured Privy Councillor in telling you that the Order about Surinam and all

[4] Parl. Debates, vol. ii. p. 551.

other conquered colonies was actually on the list of Council business on Thursday last." Nevertheless some further delays ensued, and it was not until next year that the promised Proclamation was issued.

Immediately on the return of Pitt to office, he had anxiously applied himself to prepare and produce a measure for the public defence—the Additional Force Bill, as it was called. He gave notice of it for the 1st of June, but desiring still more time to mature its details, he deferred it till the 5th. It was the very day on which he held his conference with Fox and Grey in Downing Street. Thence proceeding to the House of Commons, he unfolded at full length his very comprehensive scheme. The outline of it he had already given as a private member of Parliament in his speech of the 25th of April. He desired above all things to remove the difficulties which stood in the way of recruiting for the regular army, by putting an end to the competition which prevailed between those who recruited for a limited term and those who recruited for the general service. Out of this competition a system of enormous bounties had arisen. But he would not be satisfied merely to do away these obstacles. He desired to create a new additional force that should be a permanent foundation for a regular increase of the army. There was at present (he said) a deficiency of nearly nine thousand men in the number appointed to be raised under the Army of Reserve Bill. It would be his first object to complete that number. His next would be to reduce the Militia, which had grown to seventy-four thousand men, to its ancient establishment

of forty thousand for England and eight thousand for Scotland. The remainder, and what was then deficient of the number voted, he wished to be transferred to the additional force. This he conceived would lay the foundation for a permanent establishment which would yield twelve thousand recruits annually to the regular army. The disadvantage of the Army of Reserve Act at present was, that its severe penalties caused such high bounties to be given for substitutes. He therefore wished to make the ballot less burthensome on individuals, and both to encourage, and, in some cases, oblige the parishes to find the number of men that was assigned as their proportion. If the parishes failed, he wished to impose on them a certain and moderate fine, to go into the general recruiting fund. The new force he would propose to be raised for five years, to be joined to the regular army in the way of second battalions, and not to be liable to be called out for foreign service, but to act both as an auxiliary force to the army at home and as a stock from which the army could be recruited. The plan would have the further effect of rendering the regular army far more capable of becoming a disposable force for any distant enterprise.

No sooner was Pitt's scheme unfolded than all three parties unconnected with the Government combined against it. Their three spokesmen in the House of Commons—Windham, Fox, and Addington—all rose on the very first night and stated their decided objections. "I do not know," said Fox, "whether I shall gain any credit from the House, or from the Right Hon. Gentleman, in what I am going to say. But I can

assure them that I have endeavoured, by every effort and consideration I was able to apply to the subject, to impress my own mind with a favourable idea of the Bill." In these efforts, as Fox went on to explain, he had not succeeded.

The Second Reading of the Bill was taken on the 8th of June. An eager debate which then arose was continued till half-past two in the morning. Then the House divided, when the numbers were,—

For the Second Reading	221
Against it	181
Majority	40

On the 11th there was another keen debate, and another anxious division.

For the Speaker's leaving the Chair	219
Against it	169
Majority	50

And on the 15th again a debate, with two divisions taken on points of form and partly by surprise. With the Government there were in the last 214. Against it 186. Thus the majority on that night was reduced to 28.

The three parties in Opposition were now in high spirits. They fully hoped that Pitt might be thrust out of office before his hold upon it was confirmed. Another division on the Bill was announced for Monday the 18th, and meanwhile the three parties made all possible exertions to recruit their ranks. It will be seen from

the following note, that similar exertions were by no means wanting on the Ministerial side.

Duke of Portland to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR SIR, "Sunday evening, June 17, 1804.

"I am very sorry to trouble you with such stuff at all, but more so when it cannot but be dissatisfactory, and will add to a species of trouble which you ought never to know.

"I very much fear that Mellish will vote against you to-morrow. He was shut out on Friday, but I have too much reason to think that he came down with views of opposition. I have done all I can with respect to Mr. Moore, Lord F. Spencer, and Sir H. Dashwood. Mr. Long wrote to me about Monckton and Dawkins: I am sure the first will come if he is able, and the latter I have desired to call upon me to-morrow morning.

"Sincerely yours ever,

"PORTLAND."

Next day, with an immense throng of Members, the expected debate commenced. As the Speaker reports it, Addington spoke against the Bill at eleven, Sheridan against it at twelve, Pitt for it at one, and Fox against it at half-past two. But of all the speakers that night, none attracted more applause than Canning, who spoke earlier than all these. Without at all denying his regret that Grenville and Fox were not included among the colleagues of the new Prime Minister, he inveighed with great energy against the course which Addington was pursuing, and against the words which Lord Temple had used. He said: "I fairly and candidly avow that I give the Right Hon. Gentleman (Mr. Addington)

credit for the systematic opposition which he commenced against His Majesty's Government the moment he left His Majesty's councils. I am glad to see an inefficient administration atoned for by a vigorous opposition. And here I wish to take notice of an expression made use of by a Noble Lord (Temple), as if my Right Hon. friend (Mr. Pitt) had been a mere accession to the former Ministry, without any change having taken place. I shall content myself here with vindicating my own consistency. I objected to the administration of Foreign Affairs, and that has been changed. I objected to the Naval administration, and that has been changed. I objected to the Military administration, and that has been changed. I also objected to the general superintendence of the whole, and that has been changed. In objecting to the inefficiency of the late Ministers, I was joined by nearly all those who are now in opposition. The Noble Lord has further said that the public were disappointed in the formation of the present Ministry; amongst that public I candidly confess that no man was more disappointed than myself."

Not only Addington but all his followers were greatly stung by the words "systematic opposition." Addington, as it chanced, was out of the House at the moment, but Mr. Bragge (who, from an estate which he inherited, had now assumed the further name of Bathurst) rose immediately after Canning and protested against the phrase. So also did Addington himself when he spoke later. At half-past three in the morning the House divided with the following result:—

For the Bill	265
Against it	223
Majority . . .	42

It may be noticed of this hard won majority of 42, that it was little larger than the last on which Addington had resigned. Yet, under the circumstances of Pitt's recent accession to power, and of the fact that many Members were already pledged to the military measures of the last administration, it was thought not unsatisfactory. It proved decisive, not only of the Bill, but of the Session. The Bill passed the House of Lords after a keen debate and a division, in which of the Peers present 84 said Content, and 50 Not Content. The Session was prolonged, not by further party struggles, but by the ordinary course of public business. On the 7th of July Mr. Pitt brought down a Message from the King, "desirous that this House will enable him to take all such measures as may be necessary to disappoint or defeat any enterprise or design of his enemies, and as the exigencies of affairs may require." These words proved to be a Parliamentary circumlocution for a Vote of Credit. It was granted accordingly, and without debate, to the extent of 2,500,000*l.* for Great Britain, and of 800,000*l.* for Ireland. About one-half of the former sum would be required for payments already due. There were debts upon the Civil List to the extent of above 500,000*l.* There was a deficiency in the Navy Estimates to the extent of 320,000*l.* There was an additional expense of 160,000*l.* attending Volunteer Corps, from the days of exercise having been increased,

and from so great a number (one hundred and seventy thousand men) having been called out on permanent duty. But, as Pitt observed, after these and other deductions, there would still remain a sum of about 1,300,000*l.* applicable to any emergencies that might arise.

The Session was further prolonged by a Bill upon the Corn Trade, which had been sent up from the Commons and which came back from the Lords. There, in opposing it on the general principle, Earl Stanhope stood alone. But there some amendments in detail were made, which it was feared might trench upon the Commons' privileges. On these Mr. Pitt went to consult with the Speaker. "We agreed," says the last, "that the Lords' Amendments must be laid aside, and a new Bill brought in, which being for money, trade, &c., must go through all the regular stages, and would cost one week's more sitting for Parliament." Such were the sacrifices then willingly endured upon a point of form.

The Session having thus been protracted to a date most unusual at that period, was closed on the 31st of July by a Speech from the King. "His Majesty," so the Speaker notes, "looked extremely well, and read the Speech with great animation, but accidentally turned over two leaves together, and so omitted about one-fourth of his intended Speech. It happened, however, that the transition was not incoherent, and it escaped some of the Cabinet who had heard it before the King delivered it."

At this time the King not only looked but was in

fact quite well. To confirm his recovery he set out with the Queen and Princesses to pass the autumn at Weymouth.

No such relaxation was in store for Pitt at Walmer Castle. We find letters from him dated Downing Street, in the very middle of September.[5] Under his master-guidance active measures of defence were every where in progress. Martello towers—so called, according to Mr. Windham, from a place of that name in Corsica[6]—rose at intervals along the southern coast. A defensive canal and dyke of great strength were drawn across the plain from Hythe.[7] The chief direction of such measures might be nominally vested in Lord Chatham, but in truth it devolved on Mr. Pitt. He could seldom be spared from London during more than two or three days, and even these days of absence were for the most part employed in reviews and inspections.

On this last point I notice with regret a passage in one of Lord Grenville's most familiar letters, which, if he could have been consulted, I do not think that he would have chosen to make public. He writes as follows to Lord Buckingham, August 25, 1804: "Can any thing equal the ridicule of Pitt riding about from Downing Street to Wimbledon, and from Wimbledon to Cox Heath, to inspect military carriages, impregnable

[5] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 524.

[6] Parl. Hist., vol. i., New Series, p. 173.

[7] See the disparaging letter from the first Lord Ellenborough, inserted in Lord Sidmouth's Life (vol. ii. p. 396). This work was to extend for thirty-six miles, of which in October, 1805, fourteen were completed.

batteries, and Lord Chatham's reviews? Can he possibly be serious in expecting Bonaparte now?" Exactly similar to this was the opinion of Fox expressed exactly a year afterwards. He writes to Grey, August 28, 1805: "The alarm of invasion here was most certainly a groundless one, and raised for some political purpose by the Ministers."

It is certainly not a little strange to find the most eminent men out of office in England so completely deluded and deceived, as I will presently show, on the true designs of the Government in France. But why, in the first place, should Pitt be deemed deserving of ridicule for his cares on that account? When the spirit of the people was once roused, could he do better than still further to animate that spirit by his presence? When the funds for the national armament had been voted by the House of Commons, could he do better than see with his own eyes that they were duly and properly applied? No doubt the pursuits of a library or garden may be more delightful. No doubt it may be pleasanter to pass one's time as Lord Grenville says that he passed his.

"You will find me here very peaceably rolling my walks, and watering my rhododendrons, without any thought of the new possessor to whom Bonaparte may dispose them." Such were the words of Grenville, writing to his brother from Dropmore, April 12, 1803. Like these also were his words October 26 the same year: "I can hardly help wondering at my own folly in thinking it worth while to leave my books and gardens even for one day's attendance in the House of Lords."

The greatest respect is due to the memory of a man so able and so accomplished as was Lord Grenville. Nor are the employments of either the scholar or the horticulturist to be lightly esteemed. But we must acknowledge the far different responsibilities of a statesman out of office, and of a Minister placed at the head of public affairs in the midst of a perilous war.

But further still it is a striking fact that the period when Lord Grenville thought it so ridiculous to expect the coming of Napoleon was the very period at which Napoleon had absolutely determined to come. This fact is placed beyond all question by the French archives. "This fact," says M. Thiers, "has been sometimes doubted, but can be doubted no longer by any one who sees as I have seen several thousand official letters which all combine to the same point."[8] It may be added that several of the secret letters from Napoleon to Decrès, *Ministre de la Marine*, and from Decrès to Napoleon, are interspersed by M. Thiers in the course of his own most interesting narrative.

Napoleon then had fully fixed his plan, although imparting it to as few persons as possible, since he well knew that secrecy must be one main condition of success. He would attempt the invasion of our Kentish shores on some day in the month of August. With this purpose he repaired to Boulogne on the 20th of July, and took on himself the chief command. But he did not rely solely on the vast army or on the vast flotilla there assembled. To combine with their enterprise he had

[8] Hist. du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. v. p. 467.

framed another project well worthy of his genius. It was of the highest importance that when they began to cross the Channel they should be protected by a large, and, if possible, a superior French fleet. Now, there were eighteen ships of the line at Brest under Admiral Ganteaume, but these the English held blockaded. There were five ships of the line at Rochefort under Admiral Villeneuve, but these also the English held blockaded. Toulon, on the contrary, from its greater distance, was less suspected, and from its position could not be so closely watched. Here there were eight, and would be soon ten ships of the line. With these a skilful and intrepid seaman—and such was Latouche Treville, to whom Napoleon had assigned the high task—might sally forth in the direction of Egypt, and allow a rumour to prevail that he intended the reconquest of that country. But, on the contrary, turning short through the Straits of Gibraltar, he might suddenly appear first before Rochefort, and then before Brest, rally to himself the squadron of Villeneuve and the fleet of Ganteaume, and then with all the ships combined sail straight to Boulogne. It seemed certain that for two or three days at least the English would not be able to oppose to them an equal force; and during these two or three days the descent might be fully made. "Let us be masters of the Channel for six hours, and we are masters of the world!" Such are Napoleon's own words in a secret letter to Latouche Treville, dated the 2nd of July.[9]

[9] Thiers, vol. v. p. 189.

Here then was the whole of this most able plan decided and matured. Nothing was changed in it, except only that Napoleon, on a view of the works at Boulogne, thought a little further time desirable for their completion, and postponed the period for the enterprise from August to September. Napoleon was then in negotiation with the Court of Rome. He carried his point that His Holiness should prepare to come to France and to crown him Emperor at the shrine of Notre Dame. But he requested that the journey might be deferred until November, by which time he anticipated his own return in triumph from his English expedition.

Napoleon also directed M. Denon, then at the head of the French Mint, to prepare a medal in commemoration of his expected conquest. The die being made accordingly, was ready to be used in London, but owing to the course of events it was subsequently broken. Only three medals struck from it now, as I have heard, remain, two in France and one in England. There has been, however, an imitation cast, and of these copies I have two in bronze. The medal bears on one side the usual head of the Emperor crowned with laurel. On the reverse Hercules appears lifting up and crushing in his arms the monster Antæus; the motto being *Descente en Angleterre*, and below in smaller letters *Frappé à Londres en* 1804.

All preparations, even down to the medal, being made, Napoleon sent to Admiral Latouche Treville his final orders to put to sea. But a mightier power forbade it. Latouche Treville fell sick, and on the 20th of

August died. There was no second officer of that fleet in the secret of the intended expedition. There was no longer at Toulon either the head to direct, or the hand to execute. After some doubt and hesitation a personal friend of Decrès, Admiral Villeneuve from Rochefort, was named to the vacant post. The critical moment, however, had already passed. No sufficient time remained that summer to imbue the new chief with the necessary knowledge both of the details of the fleet to which he was appointed, and of the difficult operations which he was required to command.

Under such circumstances Napoleon with whatever disappointment felt it necessary to postpone, and, indeed, to new-model his plans. He left the expedition from Boulogne to another year, and meanwhile turned his thoughts to another object of scarcely less importance to his dynasty, and which until even the last moment was fraught with obstacles—his coronation as Emperor by the head of the Catholic Church.

Meanwhile the English arms were not inactive. In May a dash was made by Sir Sidney Smith before Ostend. He sought, but without success, to prevent the junction of a small part of the enemy's flotilla from Flushing. In July some of the outlying boats at Boulogne were attacked by Captain Owen of the Immortalité frigate; and in August some at Havre by Captain Oliver of the Melpomene. Neither of these officers could report more than a very slight achievement. But in October there ensued an enterprise of much loftier pretensions. Great hopes had been formed at the Admiralty of certain vessels which were filled

with combustibles, and called *Catamarans*. These were to be towed close under the enemy's gun-boats, and there to explode in a given time. To try this great experiment, Lord Keith, with his squadron, appeared off the coast of Boulogne. It was said by some persons who did not calculate the distance, that Mr. Pitt and others of the Ministry would be witnesses to this exploit from the ramparts of Walmer Castle.[1]

On the 2nd of October, then, the attempt was made. Seeing about one hundred and fifty of the enemy's flotilla outside the pier, Lord Keith directed the Catamarans against them. Twelve in succession were sent forward and exploded, but without the slightest mischief to the enemy's ships or batteries. Our smaller vessels in advance could withdraw in perfect order, and without the loss of a single man. The French, on their part, acknowledged the loss of twenty-five in killed and wounded. But such was the sole result of an experiment on which the public in England had been taught to build, and had built, the most towering hopes.

Out of Europe we had better fortune. In the West Indies we reduced the Dutch settlement of Surinam. In the East we defeated the French squadron of Admiral Linois. This last success was enhanced by the reflection that it was achieved solely by the merchant vessels of the China fleet. There also by land we had signally triumphed. Sir Arthur Wellesley had now commenced his long and splendid career of victory. In the course of 1803 he had gained over the Mahrattas the two great

[1] Ann. Register, 1804, p. 142.

battles of Assye and Argaum. A peace was then concluded most honourable to the administration of Lord Wellesley, and establishing, for a long time to come, the security of our Indian empire.

During this autumn, Charles the Fourth, King of Spain and the Indies—or rather Godoy, Prince of the Peace, who governed in his name—grew from an unavowed an open, and therefore perhaps the less dangerous, enemy. For a long time past the Spanish rulers had been wholly subservient to the First Consul. They had even agreed, as we have seen, to pay him a monthly subsidy towards the expenses of his war with England—a proceeding of which England was most justly entitled to complain. Still, however, we refrained from any measure of retaliation. But Mr. Frere, our Minister at Madrid, was instructed to deliver a note, which he did accordingly on the 18th of February, 1804, stating that so long as the Spaniards continued in a position of merely nominal neutrality, any naval armament in their ports must be considered as putting an immediate end to the forbearance of England.

Such was the state of things when, in the course of the September following, Admiral Cochrane, who was cruising off the coast of Gallicia, sent home intelligence that orders had been given by the Court of Madrid for arming, without loss of time, at Ferrol, four ships of the line, two frigates, and other smaller vessels; and that similar orders had been given at Carthagena and at Cadiz. Lord Harrowby at once wrote directions to Mr. Frere to use the strongest language with the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs. "You will state to M.

de Cevallos that it is impossible to consider this proceeding, unaccompanied as it has been by any previous explanation whatever, in any other light than as a menace directly hostile. It imposes upon His Majesty the duty of taking, without delay, every measure of precaution, and particularly of giving orders to his Admiral off the port of Ferrol to prevent any of the Spanish ships of war from sailing from that port, or any additional ships of war from entering it. . . . . His Majesty cannot allow Spain to enjoy all the advantages of neutrality, and at the same time to carry on against him a double war, by assisting his enemies with pecuniary succours to which no limit is assigned, and by obliging him, at the same time, to divert a part of his naval force from acting against those enemies, in order to watch the armaments carried on in ports professing to be neutral."[2]

The answers returned by M. de Cevallos at Madrid proved to be, as was foreseen, altogether unsatisfactory. Mr. Frere demanded his passports, which were sent him accordingly on the 7th of November. But meanwhile the English Cabinet had thought itself fully entitled to act on the previous warning conveyed by Mr. Frere in the month of February. It had at once sent orders to detain the treasure-ships on their way from America to Spain. Acting on these orders, near Cadiz, on the 5th of October, four English frigates fell in with as many Spanish, laden with dollars from the Rio de la Plata. The Spanish commander, when summoned, would not allow himself to be detained. An action ensued, when,

[2] Despatch from Lord Harrowby to Mr. Frere, Sept. 29, 1804.

of the four Spanish ships, three were captured and one blew up.

At these news M. d'Anduaga, the Spanish Minister in London, called upon Lord Harrowby and asked for "explanations"—as though the act did not sufficiently explain itself! "I told him," said Lord Harrowby, "that the Court of Madrid could have no reason to be surprised that such a step was taken, after the note delivered by Mr. Frere on the 18th of February last. . . . . I told him that this was the first and most obvious of the measures of precaution which had been announced. It had been thought right to announce precisely the intention of engaging the ships of war which might attempt to sail to or from Ferrol, because it would depend upon the Spanish Government, after receiving such an intimation, to give such orders as to their sailing as it might think proper, and to prevent a hostile meeting between the two squadrons. But to have announced more particularly the intention of detaining the treasure-ships must either have been perfectly useless, if the Spanish Government had no means of giving them notice of such intention, or must have afforded the opportunity of rendering it completely abortive."[3]

The result, as might be expected, was, in the course of December, a Declaration of War from the Court of Spain. It was accompanied by a Proclamation from the Prince of the Peace—quite worthy of the quarter from which it came. He described the measures of the

[3] Despatch to Mr. Frere, October 21, 1804.

English for the detention of the treasure-ships as "these robberies, these acts of treachery and assassination." He told "those distant islanders" to "hide their dishonoured heads," and to "tremble at the contemplation of their ill-gotten wealth." And he desired to remind them that the Spaniards were the same people—and even, as he might have added, without the advantage of any Godoy at that time to lead them—who had already triumphed over the Carthaginians, the Romans, the Vandals, and the Saracens.

On the 2nd of December the new Sovereign of France was crowned in solemn state by the Pope at Notre Dame. At the news of the Papal journey when actually commenced, it was clear to the English people that the French descent upon themselves was no longer imminent. There was a respite from the expected battles either by sea or land. Yet still amidst the weight of his public cares, Pitt moved but little from the neighbourhood of London. He only paid short visits of one or two days to a few of his friends: to Mr. Rose at Cuffnells, and to Lord Carrington at Wycombe; to Lord Hawkesbury at Coombe Wood, and to Lord Abercorn at the Priory near Stanmore.

The last-named nobleman I may observe in passing even as Lord Hamilton had been always among his friends. In 1784 the third number of the 'Rolliad' winds up with that name a *Pittite* list—

"And the dark brow of solemn Hamilton."

In 1789 he succeeded to the Earldom, and in 1790 was raised to the Marquisate of Abercorn. All through

life, that too solemn manner which the 'Rolliad' notes was a subject of good-humoured raillery from those who knew him best. On one occasion it is said he requested an interview with Pitt, and went accordingly to call in Downing Street. "I was much relieved," Pitt said afterwards, "when I found that he wanted only to be a Knight of the Garter; for from his way of coming in, I was afraid that he meant to ask for my interest to be elected Emperor of Germany!"

But besides these rapid visits to the Priory and to other places, Pitt ere long felt the want of some quiet country seat of his own. Finding how much he was now debarred from his favourite but more distant retreat of Walmer Castle, he took on hire, as in the autumn of 1784, a small house upon Putney Heath.

It was, perhaps, during such brief intervals of leisure that Mr. Pitt put on paper some notes for further thought, which are still preserved in his own handwriting, by the care of Mr. Adams. Only the titles or superscriptions are here added by myself.

The War.

(Paper-mark 1803.)

"Whether the attacks should be numerous or few in order to strengthen them, and in what points:—

"1. *South of Italy.*—Besides Neapolitans, 10 or 15,000 British troops and as many Russians; besides free corps raised in Albania and Italy, the latter by the King of Sardinia.

"2. *North of Italy—Switzerland and South of Germany.*—Austrian troops supported by 60,000 Russians as auxiliaries.

"*North of Germany.*—40,000 Russians, with a body of Hanoverians, a Swedish army, and a diversion from England. To advance towards the Low Countries.

"The operations on the two flanks may be modified according to the conduct of Turkey. These will probably only act when forced. Austria and Sweden may, it is thought, be brought to act voluntarily.

"It is not meant by diversion that any descent should be made from hence in the beginning, but that we should continue to menace their coasts, and not attempt anything in the interior till after some decided success.

"Advantages to be given to any Power if necessary should be regulated with a view to the future safety of Europe, and the zeal shown by each Power. It is supposed nothing can be proposed for Prussia consistent with the safety and interests of the rest of Europe, except the provinces she ceded to France. Austria is expected from the little which has passed to be very moderate, and content with inconsiderable acquisitions in Germany and Italy.

"King of Sardinia should not only be re-established, but his share should be made as large as possible.

"Switzerland should be *arrondi*, and its position strengthened as much as possible.

"The same principle should be followed with respect to Holland."

Germany.

(Paper-mark 1803.)

"The present situation of the German body neither good for the countries themselves nor for Europe.

"Should a part of it be *englobé* by the two great Powers, or a third great State formed in the middle of

Germany? This can scarce be thought of, from its injustice to so many Princes of the Empire.

"Could a more concentrated Federative Government be formed out of the different States; and should not in that case both Austria and Prussia be separated from it?

"Principle of mediation being to precede war.

"Intimate union necessary between England and Russia, who are the only Powers that for many years can have no jealousy or opposite interests."

Napoleon.

"I see various and opposite qualities—all the great and all the little passions unfavourable to public tranquillity—united in the breast of one man, and of that man, unhappily, whose personal caprice can scarce fluctuate for an hour without affecting the destiny of Europe. I see the inward workings of fear struggling with pride in an ardent, enterprising, and tumultuous mind. I see all the captious jealousy of conscious usurpation dreaded, detested, and obeyed—the giddiness and intoxication of splendid but unmerited success—the arrogance, the presumption, the self-will of unlimited and idolized power, and—more dreadful than all in the plenitude of authority—the restless and incessant activity of guilty but unsated ambition."

It is not clear what was the object of this fragment upon Napoleon. At first sight it might appear intended for a speech. But as I learn from Mr. Adams, and have heard also from many other quarters, it was not the practice of Mr. Pitt to compose beforehand and write down any part of the speeches which he designed to make; nor does any other fragment such as this appear among his papers.

There are many persons to whom the judgment of Napoleon as here expressed may seem on some points unduly severe. They must remember that it was not drawn on dispassionate observation as in a period of peace, but was levelled at a powerful enemy expected day by day to invade us.

Having here given the judgment of Pitt upon Napoleon, I feel tempted at the risk of some digression to give also in this place the judgment of Napoleon upon Pitt. It is comprised in some manuscript memoirs which have been only a few months since used by M. Thiers. We find then that on the 11th of June, 1815, the day before he set out for his Waterloo campaign, Napoleon was conversing with his Ministers on the difficulties of his newly granted Constitution. "I do not know," he said, "how in my absence you will manage to lead the Chambers. Monsieur Fouché thinks that popular assemblies are to be controlled by gaining over some old jobbers, or flattering some young enthusiasts. That is only intrigue, and intrigue does not carry one far. In England such means are not altogether neglected; but there are greater and nobler ones. Remember Mr. Pitt, and look at Lord Castlereagh! . . . With a sign from his eyebrows, Mr. Pitt could control the House of Commons, and so can Lord Castlereagh now. . . . Ah! if I had such instruments, I should not be afraid of the Chambers. But have I anything to resemble these?"[4]

During the last half of this year Mr. Pitt and Lord

[4] Hist. du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. xix. p. 619, published Aug. 1861.

Eldon were engaged in, as it proved, a very thankless and vexatious business. This was to negotiate a reconciliation between the King and the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness, ever since a military post had been denied him, was anxious to show any personal slight in his power to the King. For example, it was known that His Majesty was strict in requiring the attendance of his family and household at the Drawing Room held every year in honour of his birthday, on the 4th of June. In 1804 not only did the Prince on that day remain absent from Court, but to prove that his absence was not owing to indisposition, he drove through the streets upon the coach-box of his barouche.[5] Nevertheless, a reconciliation was desired by his own friends as much as by the King's. Lord Moira and Mr. Tierney acted mainly on the one side; Mr. Pitt and Lord Eldon on the other. They prevailed on the high contracting parties to have an interview in the summer at Kew, before the King set out for Weymouth. It was to take place in the presence of the Queen and the Princesses, and only general conversation was to pass. At the appointed time their Majesties and their Royal Highnesses were ready, when there came a note which the Prince had addressed to the Chancellor, and which the Chancellor transmitted to the King. It was to excuse himself from attending His Majesty on account of illness. "This excuse," said the King, "I most readily accepted, and wrote so to the Chancellor."[6]

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[5] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 517.

[6] See the King's own account to Rose at Weymouth, Sept. 30, 1804. Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 168.

In the autumn, however, this unpromising negotiation was renewed. The King desired to have under his own charge the education and household of the Princess Charlotte, now almost nine years of age, and heiress presumptive to the Throne. Lord Moira was understood by Mr. Pitt to signify the Prince's assent; and the other points of difference being then adjusted, an interview of formal reconciliation between His Majesty and His Royal Highness was brought to pass at Kew. The King was next proceeding to form the establishment of the young Princess. As chief Preceptor he desired to name Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Exeter; and as chief Governess, Lady George Murray, a person of most unexceptionable character, whose late husband, Lord George, had been Bishop of St. David's. But at the last moment the Prince of Wales drew back. He declared that he never had intended to put his daughter's education out of his own control. He declared that Lord Moira had exceeded his powers; while Lord Moira, on his part, declared that he had not said what Mr. Pitt supposed. In the mean time the young Princess was removed to Carlton House, and the dissensions in the Royal family, dissensions which all good subjects had trusted to see hushed up, were again and as painfully renewed.

These family dissensions extended also to the ill-mated and ill-fated Princess of Wales. Mr. Pitt had been from the first determined not to see her oppressed. To his memory Mr. Brougham, as her Counsel at the Bar of the House of Lords, October 3, 1820, in solemn strains appealed: "Mr. Pitt was her earliest defender

and friend in this country. He died in 1806, and but a few weeks afterwards the first inquiry into the conduct of Her Royal Highness began." But the more Mr. Pitt desired to shield her from her enemies, the more he was bound to warn her of her faults. The conduct of Her Royal Highness in her retirement at Blackheath was on some points disrespectful to the Prince, and on others, to say the least, unguarded. At Cuffnells in October, 1804, Mr. Pitt told Rose that he and the Chancellor had made to the Princess in the most earnest manner their joint remonstrances, which Her Royal Highness received in the coldest manner possible, utterly unmoved for a long time. At last made sensible of the absolute necessity of some change in her conduct by the effect that would otherwise be produced in the public mind, she promised an alteration. But Pitt said he had little hope that the alteration would be really made.

India, also, at this time claimed the Prime Minister's attention. The conduct of Lord Wellesley in the matter of the Subsidiary Treaties, and the disapproval of the Court of Directors, made his return almost a matter of necessity. Lord Castlereagh told Lord Cornwallis that "Mr. Pitt had entered thoroughly into the business," and had come to the conclusion that a change was indispensable.[7] Lord Wellesley, however, was at this period very willing to return; and there was no breach in the feelings of amity between him and Mr. Pitt. The question was, then, as to the choice of the new Governor-General. The Duke of Portland made a

7 Cornwallis Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 522.

most earnest appeal to Mr. Pitt in behalf of his second son, Lord William Bentinck.[8] But Mr. Pitt, in conjunction with Lord Castlereagh, prevailed on Lord Cornwallis to undertake for the second time this arduous task.

Another transaction in which Mr. Pitt was at this time engaged related to Lord Auckland. We have seen that when Mr. Pitt was forming his last administration, his Lordship had been almost as of course removed from his office as Joint Postmaster-General.

Lord Auckland had of his own one or two large diplomatic pensions. His wife had a further pension of 800*l.* a year. His son had a rich sinecure as an Auditor of the Exchequer. Now, as Lord Auckland's own pension was suspended during his tenure of office, it was computed that his loss of income by the loss of office would not exceed 500*l.* a year. Pitt was of opinion that Lord Auckland's diplomatic services would warrant a second pension of that amount to Lady Auckland, and he desired in that manner to promote the pecuniary comfort of the family. There is something in that course, as it strikes me, highly characteristic of a noble nature. Pitt would not consent to any renewal of intimacy where once, as he thought, that intimacy had been abused; but on the other hand, Pitt desired to shield his former friend from every loss beyond the cessation of his friendship.

There was from a point of form some delay at the Treasury in giving effect to the arrangement. At its

[8] MS. letter in the Pitt Papers, dated Dec. 17, 1804.

close we find Lord Auckland write on it as follows to John Beresford at Dublin: "I told you at the time that when I quitted the Post Office it was signified to me that His Majesty had approved of my having an income equivalent to what I was losing, and that I had written and had received an answer gracious on that point and very confidential on another point. I must now do Mr. Pitt the justice to say that he has completed that business in a way that places me independent of political chances and changes, and is also more beneficial to my family." [9]

Lord Auckland also wrote to Pitt himself, and I here subjoin his letter. I doubt if that letter received any reply. I am sure that it produced no renewal of friendship.

"My dear Sir, "Eden Farm, Dec. 18, 1804.

"Having learnt from the Treasury that the warrants which you had recommended in consequence of my quitting the Post Office are now in a state of completion, I should be dissatisfied with myself if I omitted to express a warm and grateful sense of your kindness and favour shown to me during a long course of years, and on many occasions both public and domestic. That kindness is more especially felt in the present instance, as its effects may be eventually material to the person whose interests you know to be justly dear to me beyond all worldly considerations.

"Permit me to add, that whatever may have been the misconceptions, or the causes of grievance, real or imaginary, on either part, I now consent, and think it

[9] P.S. dated Nov. 20, 1804, in the Beresford Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 308

right, that in the comparative infirmities of human nature the whole should be charged to my side of the account. But let it be understood, on the other hand, that I have ever preserved the same affection towards you, without interruption, and in all times and circumstances.

"Nor have I ever ceased to reflect, with a mixture of fair pride, pleasure, and regret, that so many of the happiest days of my life have been passed in your conversation and society.

"Ever affectionately and sincerely yours,

"AUCKLAND."

In the letter to Mr. Beresford, from which I just now quoted, Lord Auckland also gives some news of the day, and this among the rest: "I much fear that the Archbishop is going." Here he refers to his brother-in-law, Archbishop Moore of Canterbury. The life of that Prelate was indeed well understood to be in danger; and the chances of his succession began to be discussed. Foremost among the probable successors was a cousin of the Duke of Rutland, Dr. Manners Sutton, Bishop of Norwich and Dean of Windsor. In this last capacity he had become well known to and most highly esteemed by the King. At Cuffnells, in October, His Majesty expressed his hope and belief that he and Mr. Pitt should agree in Bishop Sutton to succeed Archbishop Moore.[1]

On this point, however, His Majesty was much mistaken. In the course of November a new competitor appeared. This was another Bishop and Dean—Dr.

[1] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 194.

Tomline, Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of St. Paul's. He first stated his pretensions in a letter to Rose, which he requested Rose to lay before Mr. Pitt;[2] and Mr. Pitt at once espoused his cause with all the zeal and warmth of an early friend. But the further progress of this affair will best be shown by some correspondence of the Bishop himself.

Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Deanery, St. Paul's, Dec. 3, 1804.

"I went to dine and sleep at Putney on Saturday, and Mr. Pitt, as soon as he saw me, told me that he was to be at Windsor the next day or two, and would certainly speak upon the subject about which you have so kindly interested yourself. He desired to see me this morning at breakfast at Putney; but he came down late, and I could not see him alone, although he said before a third person, 'Bishop, I want to speak to you, and must get into your carriage with you.' He did so, and told me what had passed. It is by no means decisive; but as far as it goes it is rather favourable, inasmuch as no fixed determination or promise was mentioned, although a very strong wish and opinion, of course against me, or rather in favour of the other person, were expressed. The Lord Chancellor was present at Windsor. Mr. Pitt means to write fully upon the subject, which he thinks better than conversation in the present state of the King. I am confident that he will do everything in his power, short of absolute force. Nothing can be more kind than his manner and expressions; and my mind is perfectly at ease, indeed much more than at ease.

[2] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 84.

"I have but a moment to say that I rather think we shall remain in town and at Fulham till Saturday, when we shall go to Wycombe to meet Mr. Pitt at Lord Carrington's. Adieu, my dear Sir.

"Yours ever most cordially,

"G. LINCOLN.

"Things are getting worse than ever with the Prince."

"MY DEAR SIR, "Wycombe, Dec. 11, 1804.

"I received your letter on Saturday, just as we were setting out for this place to meet Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt came hither to dinner on Saturday, and went away yesterday morning; he seems remarkably well, and in high spirits: he thinks that additional strength in the House of Commons is very desirable, though not absolutely necessary. It will be derived from a quarter, if from any, which will not give much satisfaction to you and me. While he was here he wrote the rough copy of a letter to His Majesty, relative to the expected vacancy, as strong and as kind as I could wish; but still we all of us consider the event as uncertain. . . . .

"Yours ever most affectionately,

"G. LINCOLN."

"Buckden Palace, Dec. 18, 1804.

"Mr. Pitt has received no answer to his letter on my business."

CHAPTER XL.

1804 — 1805.

Resignation of Lord Harrowby — Reconciliation between Pitt and Addington — Comments of Lord Camden and Bishop Tomline — Lord Mulgrave appointed Secretary for Foreign Affairs — Canning proposes to retire — Addington becomes President of the Council and Viscount Sidmouth — Letter from Napoleon to George the Third — Deaths of Lord Loughborough and of Archbishop Moore — Application from Bishop Pelham — Parliamentary debates — Establishment for the Princess Charlotte — Pitt's last Budget.

EARLY in December, and through an untoward accident, Mr. Pitt lost the aid of a principal colleague. Lord Harrowby missed his footing on the stone stair-case of the Foreign Office, and fell on the front part of his head. He was so much hurt that for some days his life was thought to be in danger. Even when he had recovered, his nerves were so much shaken, and his health was so far impaired, that he found it necessary to send in his resignation. It was a great loss, and one not easy to supply.

Before he made the new appointment which this misfortune rendered requisite, Mr. Pitt resolved to follow out the idea which had occurred to him of a considerable accession to his ranks. Why might not Pitt and Addington act once more together? They were now, it is true, upon the coldest terms. "I know," writes Thomas Grenville to a brother, "that only two

days before, upon Pitt touching his hat as he passed by Addington, Addington observed to Dyson, who was riding by his side, that even that greeting was new to him."[1] Yet nothing had occurred between them inconsistent with the high honour of either. Nothing had passed to make impossible a renewal of their ancient friendship. If Addington would join the Government heartily and fully, there would follow not less than forty Members who had continued to adhere to him, and there would be established, beyond all the efforts of Fox and Grenville, a sufficient Ministerial majority in the House of Commons.

With these views the first step of Mr. Pitt was, through Lord Hawkesbury, to sound Mr. Addington. Finding the disposition favourable, he next wrote to consult the King. There could be no doubt of His Majesty's delighted acquiescence.[2] The negotiation then proceeding, a personal interview between the two statesmen was arranged. It took place at Lord Hawkesbury's country house, Coombe Wood, on the afternoon of Sunday the 23rd of December; and Mr. Addington subsequently gave a full account of it to his friend the Speaker. It appears that Lord Hawkesbury quitted the room before Mr. Pitt came into it; and Pitt on entering stretched out his hand to Addington and said, "I rejoice to take you by the hand again." The interview continued three hours without any third person being

[1] Courts and Cabinets of George the Third, vol. iii. p. 404.

[2] See in my Appendix Mr. Pitt's letter from his villa at Putney, Dec. 17, 1804, and the King's answer the next day.

present, and "not without some emotion," as Mr. Addington related it.[3]

Next day, at Richmond, there was another interview between the two statesmen of an hour's duration, and on Wednesday the 26th Pitt went alone to join the family dinner of Addington at Richmond Park. Their old feelings of intimacy seemed to be rapidly reviving.

There were, however, many matters to adjust. Addington required explanations both as to the Spanish War and the Additional Force Bill. Then as to office, Pitt proposed that Addington should go up to the House of Lords and accept the Presidency of the Council, which the Duke of Portland from ill health was very ready to relinquish. Addington, on the other hand, wished to remain in the House of Commons, and to take a seat in the Cabinet without office. Finally he gave way upon both these points, though not without much regret and some correspondence. But he insisted that if he did take office, he must carry into the Cabinet with him at least one friend, namely Lord Hobart, who had recently succeeded to the Earldom of Buckinghamshire. He must also claim that Bond, Bragge Bathurst, and others of his friends should be considered for lesser offices as vacancies might arise.

Pitt readily promised to consider these gentlemen hereafter. The other condition was rendered possible

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[3] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 537. He gives as the date of this interview Monday the 24th, but this must be an error, since both the King's letter in my Appendix and Mr. Addington's in Dean Pellew's biography name the Sunday.

at present by the arrangement which Pitt made for the Foreign Office. After some consideration he determined to appoint Lord Mulgrave, who, among the few statesmen then at his disposal, seemed to him best fitted for the post, and who would leave the Chancellorship of the Duchy, with a seat in the Cabinet, open to Lord Buckinghamshire.

We find Pitt, on Christmas Day, write to Lord Chatham and announce the coming event.

"Bromley Hill, Dec. 25, 1804.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,

"On considering carefully the state of parties, and the nature of the opposition we have to encounter, I have satisfied myself that though we should certainly have strength enough to stand our ground, our majority would not be such as to meet difficult questions with advantage, or to prevent much possible embarrassment to the public service, as well as uneasiness to the King's mind. Under this impression I have felt it my duty not to let any recollection of past differences stand in the way of recruiting, as far as possible, those whose former habits and opinions render them most likely cordially to concur in supporting the King's Government. I trust you will think that I have decided as I ought; and you will, I am sure, be happy to hear that I have in consequence had a communication with Addington, which led to our meeting the day before yesterday, and again yesterday morning; and that having found his disposition perfectly corresponding with my own, we have had no difficulty in coming to a perfectly friendly and cordial understanding, and in having a very satisfactory explanation on all the chief public points which are now depending. If the Duke

of Portland should not be disinclined (which he probably will not), either now or a short time hence, to open the Presidentship of the Council for Addington, and if I can succeed in finding some proper office for Lord Buckinghamshire, such an arrangement will be very satisfactory to Addington. At all events he seems thoroughly determined to give every possible proof of his disposition to support Government. I shall be kept in town still some days, partly by this and other business, and partly waiting for a west wind, but I hope by the end of the week to run down to Bath.

... "Ever, my dear brother, &c.,

"W. PITT."

Lord Chatham, as we find from his answer, rejoiced at the tidings. But, on the other hand, Pitt had to encounter much repugnance on the part of many of his followers. So early as the 21st there was, for example, a letter of great length upon the subject from one who was both a Cabinet colleague and personal friend. A few paragraphs from that letter will suffice to show its general purport.

Earl Camden to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR PITT, "Arlington Street, Dec. 21, 1804.

"As you have told me that nothing makes you so bilious as arrangements, my only excuse for troubling you upon them is, that they have the same effect on me. . . . . The communication already made to the King and Mr. A. must show how far you are personally inclined to go for the good of the King's service for the sake of the former, and how ready you are to forget injuries from old regard to the latter; and

if there is an opening from the present state of the negotiation that Mr. A. should delay coming into office till after he has supported Government, I cannot express the anxiety I feel you should not suffer it to pass by. The union of Grenville and Fox, for the professed purpose of forcing a Government on the King, is reason enough for Mr. Addington to join in the support of your Government, and it is the only creditable line he can take; but to make it so, he ought not *now* to take office. . . . . I am differently circumstanced from any of your colleagues, for during the whole of the last year prior to the change I had that sort of communication with persons of all parties in endeavouring to keep them, as far as I could, to one point, which of course produced remarks not very friendly to Addington, so that an immediate union with Mr. A., not preceded by any previous support on his part, will make me feel extremely uncomfortable.

. . . . . .

"Most sincerely yours,

"CAMDEN."

Bishop Tomline, also, was by no means friendly to these overtures. He details their progress as follows:—

Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Fulham Palace, Dec. 27, 1804.

"Yesterday Mr. Pitt was preparing to go and dine at Richmond with Mr. Addington. He expressed himself perfectly satisfied with the interview on Sunday, and related to me the principal things which passed. It was not settled what particular office Mr. A. is to have. . . . . I stated to Mr. Pitt how much better it would be that all this should be deferred for some

months, and that in the mean time Mr. A. and his friends should *support*. Mr. Pitt thought that this could not be accomplished, and assigned some reasons. The whole was to be talked over yesterday after dinner.

. . . . . .

"Mr. Pitt was in high spirits. He talked of going to Bath on Saturday or Sunday, if the wind continues east, and sending to Plymouth and Falmouth, and desiring that Mr. B. Frere, if he should arrive, would go to Bath, instead of going directly to town. Mr. Pitt would return to town about the 9th; but I am of opinion, upon the whole, that he will not go, and more especially as there is some important Russian business which must be settled before he can leave town, exclusive of this political arrangement; and he must also go to Windsor, which, indeed, he might perhaps do on his way to Bath. On the other hand, he may perhaps want to return to town after he has seen His Majesty.

"I shall remain quietly here to-day, and intend to be in Downing Street to-morrow morning, before Mr. Pitt's breakfast hour, for the chance of getting some conversation with him. Had I been at Buckden, Lord and Lady Grenville would have dined and slept there yesterday, the very day Mr. P. dined with Mr. A. What a paragraph for the newspapers!

"I expect to see Lord G. at Buckden, on his way to Lord Carysfort's. He has promised. Adieu.

"Always most affectionately yours,

"G. LINCOLN."

Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Deanery, St. Paul's, Dec. 29, 1804.

"I read your letter, which I found upon my coming from St. Paul's this morning, on my way to

Downing Street. I went to Mr. Pitt, in his dressing-room, which he was just leaving; and he was scarcely seated at his breakfast-table, when he said, 'Have you heard from Rose lately? Does he know what is going on?' I told him that I had given you a general idea of the business, as I concluded he (Mr. Pitt) would have no objection. 'Quite otherwise, for I have intended to write to him myself, but could never find leisure. I am glad he knows it from you. . . . .' He said he would write to you to-day, if possible; if not, upon his road to Bath. He still talks of setting out to-morrow. . . . . But I must conclude. I am going to an early and short dinner with Mr. Pitt, that he may prepare for his Bath journey, of which I have still some doubts. Let me hear from you.

"Yours ever cordially,

"G. LINCOLN.

"Recollect that there was no *difference of principle* between Mr. A. and Mr. P., and that Mr. P. ridiculed him as *First Minister*. The King approves of Lord Mulgrave. Nothing new about the arrangement. Mr. Pitt agreed to meet Mr. A. yesterday at Hatsell's. Mr. A. came to town on purpose, and after waiting an hour and a half, he sent to Downing Street to inquire after Mr. Pitt. The answer was that he was gone to Windsor, and was not expected back for several hours! Mr. Pitt forgot the appointment that they were to meet to-day."

Addington felt no displeasure at the unexpected absence of Pitt from Mr. Hatsell's when he found that it had been caused by a sudden summons from the King. So he learnt from the King himself, who came in a friendly manner and without further notice to call

upon his former Minister at Richmond. The King further desired Addington to attend him the next day. This he did accordingly. "I am just returned from Kew"—so writes Addington to his brother—"where I passed an hour and a half with His Majesty, and partook of his dinner, which consisted of mutton chops and pudding. He was in excellent spirits, and quite well."[4]

In the letter from Bishop Tomline which I just now inserted, the Bishop seems to think that Mr. Pitt after all would not make his intended visit to Bath. Here his Lordship proved a true prophet. The calls of public business forbade it. Much as Pitt's physician pressed the journey, much as his health required it, he found it necessary to remain in or close to Downing Street until the meeting of Parliament.

At Bath, Pitt had expected to meet Lord Mulgrave. Instead of going, he wrote to his friend on the last day of the year, and proposed to him the Foreign Office. Lord Mulgrave accepted the offer with alacrity, and at once appointed as his Under Secretary of State his brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Ward, the future author of *Tremaine*.[5]

Of all Pitt's friends at this time there was certainly no one to whom the junction with Addington was nearly so unwelcome as to Canning. This can be no matter of surprise to any one who recollects how keen were the satires he had written, how adverse the senti-

[4] Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 342.

[5] Memoirs of Ward, by the Hon. Edmund Phipps, vol. i. p. 162.

ments he had expressed. His mortification on the subject is most clearly shown in a confidential letter which he wrote on New Year's Day.

Mr. Canning to Lady Hester Stanhope.

"South Hill, Jan. 1, 1805.

"Your letter, dear Lady H., has afforded me all the *comfort* that is to be derived from the confirmation of the very worst of my apprehensions. But even this is some relief after the state of tormenting ignorance and anxiety in which I have been kept for the last ten days. To say that I am not heavily disappointed in respect to one result,[6] or that I look with indifference at the other, as it affects myself, would be an unworthy dissimulation. Undoubtedly I should have been gratified, I hope from better than merely personal motives, by the opportunities which a different result in one case would have given me, and I do not pretend to despise the advantages which the other takes away. But stronger stars have prevailed, and I must give way.

"I am almost sure I need not tell you, I am sure I need not remind Mr. Pitt, that the change which makes Mr. A. a Minister brings back precisely that state of things under which he was kind enough to say, of his own accord, in more than one conversation last spring, but particularly in that which took place between us the morning after he had been with the King, that he would not have pressed me to take office,[7] nor would he have thought it becoming in me to do so. Of the difference between *taking* or *keeping* subordinate office, under

[6] Lord Mulgrave's appointment, and Mr. A.'s. (Note on the MS. by Lady Hester.)

[7] In the case of Mr. A.'s forming part of the Government, as C. had abused him so openly. (Note by Lady Hester.)

these same circumstances, I am not aware; and I am persuaded that the general feeling, the first thought of everybody who condescends to think of me at all in this business, is that the same arrangement which places Mr. A. in the Cabinet displaces me.

"You will perhaps ask me why, with this consequence in my mind, I did not state my opinions more fully when the subject of the negotiation for Mr. A.'s return was first mentioned to me at Putney.

"I will tell you why. In the first place, the measure was mentioned to me, not as asking my opinion, but as announcing what was to be. In the second place, I inferred from what was said, that Peerage and Pension, not Cabinet office, was what it was in contemplation to give to Mr. A.; and to this I was so far from having the smallest objection, that I believe Mr. Pitt will do me the justice to remember that I was at least one of the first after the change who expressed a wish that such a proposal could be made acceptable to A.; and that I repeated to him a conversation that I had had with, I think, Samuel Thornton, in support of that suggestion. In the third place, I was totally mistaken, as I since find, as to the time at which the arrangement, whatever it might be, was to be made; for when I asked if any step had yet been taken towards the negotiation, I understood Mr. Pitt to answer—No. I did then give my opinion very fully, thinking that question still open, as to the extreme difference and disadvantage of bringing the matter about, as has now been done, by private overtures, and unexplained agreement, instead of letting it gradually ripen in Parliament, and grow out of the course of things which would naturally arise there, if A. was either ready to make proposals, or desirous of receiving them.

. . . . . .

"A. is (if I understand your letter right) a Minister, and I am—nothing. I cannot help it. I cannot face the House of Commons or walk the streets in this state of things, as I am. I wish only that I could have foreseen this, among other things which you tell me I am accused of having foreseen (and now boasting my foresight of them), in the spring.

"But wherefore do I write all this to you? Because it is introductory to something which I wish to have said,—to a request which I wish to make to him; and through you I come to him with more confidence of not being misunderstood. *You* stand instead of pages of preface and apology, and as a voucher for us to each other that we mean each other kindly and fairly.

"What I have to ask is this, and it is the most important favour that he can grant, or I receive: that he will make what is inevitable, as little disagreeable as it can be, by making it, at least in part, his own act. I do not mean by sending me my dismissal, but by appearing to consider my retreat as a natural, if not a necessary consequence of the other transaction—lamenting, if he will, that I should have committed myself so much as to make serving under A. personally discreditable to me; wishing, if he pleases, that I did not feel it to be so; but admitting at the same time to others (as he has before to myself), that he does not wonder that I should so feel it, and cannot blame my acting upon that feeling.

"There are two quarters particularly where, if he entertains these sentiments (and assuredly he did entertain them), he would do me incalculable service by expressing them. First to the King, with whom, for no political purpose, but because he has been always very good to me, and I fear he thinks I was wanting in duty (which God knows I was not) to him, I should wish if

possible to stand well, and who, though he may perhaps resent an act that looks like hostility to A., has, if I mistake not, a cordial approbation for even a mistaken sense of honour; and whom, above all, I would not have think that I am capable of looking *elsewhere* for favour.

"The other place is Wimbledon,[8] where Mr. Pitt's declaration that he is satisfied would save me a world of hopeless explanation, and where I know nothing else that would obtain for me a chance of being understood.

"For the rest I care not.

"And now, dearest Lady H., do not throw down this letter in a passion, and condemn it as the first burst of disappointment upon the first reading of your letter. Be it known to you, I received your letter last night, and have slept upon it (as much sleep as I could get after such a letter), which you are aware is an infallible recipe for sober thinking.

"If I am not much mistaken, there is not one expression of anger, resentment, irritation, or extravagance, nor, I am sure, a witty one (which is the next crime in degree), throughout the whole. I have avoided too, I hope I have, every symptom of sensibility; for when I think with what sensibility, and whose, mine has been weighed in the scale, and found wanting, I am sick of the word and the thing. I have written, too, without consultation or communication with any (male) human being, nor shall I be hasty to speak or write upon the subject.

"Adieu, dear Lady H. You are very good to attempt to console me with all the fine things that are said of me, and particularly the advantage of having such a person '*afloat*.' I shall be '*afloat*,' you see, and perhaps in the sense that your friend likes best, though he might not tell you so.

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[8] Lord Melville's house.

"I need not say I wish to hear from you. It will be a great comfort to me to hear from Mr. Pitt. The only thing that I have felt *unkind* is, that during the agitation of questions so peculiarly interesting to me, he should not once have written, nor expressed a wish to see me. Now, I suppose, we shall hardly meet, as he does not appear to have put South Hill among the excursions which are to take the place of Bath (I wish he could have done so), and I see no business that I have in town; and besides, my everlasting leg is just now not in a state to go there.

"I am sending a servant to town, and you will therefore get this letter, as I did yours, before going to bed. Sleep upon it soundly, and let Mr. Pitt see all, or as much of it as you think right, to-morrow.

"Adieu. God bless you.

"My servant does not return for a day or two, so write not by him, but by the post."

I do not know what reply may have been given to this letter. Probably Pitt himself conversed with his youthful friend. Probably it was Pitt who wrought on him to stay in office, not on any selfish grounds, but as a call of public duty, at a period of national danger.

It might be easily foreseen that the indisposition felt by Mr. Canning towards Mr. Addington would be just as great upon the other side. "As to Canning, Addington said his feelings never could be altered; he never could meet him; but he had no desire to interfere with his private friendships, or prospects of success."[9]

Meanwhile the proposed arrangements were in rapid

[9] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 540.

progress, and attained their full completion. The Earl of Buckinghamshire became Chancellor of the Duchy. Mr. Addington became President of the Council, and was raised to the Peerage as Viscount Sidmouth. The first person who wrote to him under his new designation was Mr. Pitt himself.

"Downing Street, Friday,
"DEAR LORD SIDMOUTH, Jan. 11, 1805. 6 P.M.

"The Duke of Portland waives the Chancellorship of the Duchy, and agrees to remain in the Cabinet without office. Nothing could be kinder or handsomer than his whole conduct; and, unless he should be more unwell to-morrow, our Cabinet is to be at Burlington House.

"affectionately yours,
"W. P."

As to Lord Sidmouth's friends, Mr. Pitt expressed his hopes to make a very early opening for some of them in lesser office, and meanwhile he became reconciled to them all. "Steele and Pitt shook hands on Thursday last:" so notes the Speaker in his Diary. It is most pleasing to find the close of the short estrangement between these very early and very cordial friends.

Meanwhile Mr. Wilberforce had written to consult Mr. Pitt as to the necessity of his attendance at the Meeting of Parliament, and Pitt had replied as follows:

"Downing Street, Jan. 4, 1805.

"MY DEAR WILBERFORCE,

"I have hardly time for more than one word, and that word I am afraid must be '*Come*,' though I say so with reluctance under the circumstances you

mention. But by my last accounts Opposition is collecting all its force, and it is therefore very important that we should secure as full an attendance as possible. There are a great many points on which I shall be very impatient to talk with you, but on which I have no time to write. Harrowby is out of all danger, but his general health, I am sorry to say, will make it impossible for him to encounter any longer the fatigues of his office. The loss of his assistance will be a great misfortune, but we must do as well as we can. The person whom, on the whole, I think best to succeed him is Mulgrave.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. P."

Wilberforce did accordingly come up to town. In his Journal he relates how one morning he called on Pitt, and walked with him round the Park. "'I am sure,' said Pitt to me, 'that you are glad to hear that Addington and I are one again.' And then he added, with a sweetness of manner which I shall never forget, 'I think they are a little hard upon us in finding fault with our making it up again, when we have been friends from our childhood, and our fathers were so before us. Yet they say nothing to Grenville for uniting with Fox, though they have been fighting all their lives.'"[1]

At the beginning of 1805 there came a letter from the Emperor Napoleon to King George the Third. It expressed, though in very general terms, a strong desire for peace; but so much were particulars avoided, that, in the judgment of Mr. Pitt and his colleagues, this overture was designed for popular effect rather than

[1] Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. iii. p. 211.

positive negotiation. An answer was framed and sent, not in His Majesty's name, but from Lord Mulgrave to M. de Talleyrand. It declared that the King had most sincerely the object of peace at heart, but must, in concluding it, act in concert with certain of the Powers on the Continent, and especially the Emperor of Russia.

In January died at Windsor very suddenly, from an attack of gout in the stomach, the Earl of Rosslyn, better known as Lord Loughborough. Connected with his death there is a curious story which Lord Brougham and Lord Campbell have already told. It seems that when the tidings were brought to Windsor Castle, the King himself examined the messenger. He inquired again and again whether it might not be a false report. "Are you quite sure," he repeated, "that Lord Rosslyn is really dead?" When assured that the fact was certainly so, and that there could be no mistake about it, His Majesty felt free to exclaim, "Then he has not left a greater knave behind him in my dominions!"

Lord Campbell observes, and I concur with him, that this story seems to rest on undoubted authority.[2] I have myself heard it from several persons who were in public life at the time.

Such then was the close of that accomplished and, on many points, most eminent man, whom some forty years before Churchill had portrayed with almost equal bitterness:—

> "That pert, prim prater of the Northern race,
> Guilt in his heart, and famine in his face!"

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[2] Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 334.

Another death in January, but unlike Lord Rosslyn's a far from sudden one, was that of Archbishop Moore. It brought of course to issue the differences as to the choice of his successor. I have not found among the Pitt Papers any letter bearing upon them, either to or from the King. That which Pitt wrote from Wycombe is nowhere, so far as I know, preserved. It seems probable, I think, that the decisive struggle took place by word of mouth. Lord Sidmouth once said to Dean Milman, that such strong language he believed had hardly ever passed between a Sovereign and his Minister.

Finally, however, the Sovereign prevailed, and the Bishop of Norwich was appointed. Here is a subsequent letter from the rival Prelate.

Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Buckden Palace, Feb. 4, 1805.

"A thousand thanks for your letter, which I received yesterday. . . . .

"Mr. Pitt's assurances and exertions upon the occasion, though not successful, have given me the most heartfelt satisfaction. I had a most kind letter from him the beginning of last week, which implied that he had acquiesced. The triumphs and exultations will give me personally no pain—I rather mean on my own private account; but I entirely agree with you that this defeat may be of serious mischief upon public grounds. And, indeed, I know persons of great consequence who will consider Mr. Pitt's acquiescence as very uncreditable to him, and who are represented to me as waiting for the result of this struggle. I am confident that Mr. Pitt has not the slightest idea of resigning or being forced

out, and that he looks forward to a long continuance in office. . . . .

"Yours most truly and affectionately,

"G. LINCOLN."

The See of Norwich thus left vacant was also of course an object of ambition. Applications for preferment have in general no feature of novelty; but there is something, as it seems to me, worthy of record in the plan of soliciting a favour by returning thanks for it as though already conferred. On that ground I give insertion to the two following letters. The writer of the first was Dr. George Pelham, Bishop of Bristol, and son of the Earl of Chichester.

Bishop of Bristol to Mr. Pitt.

"SIR, "Welbeck Street, Friday (Feb. 8), 1805.

"I have heard from so many quarters that you have been kind enough to think of recommending me to His Majesty to succeed to the vacant See of Norwich, that I can no longer refrain expressing my gratitude to you, if such is your intention; and of assuring you that by so doing you will be conferring a lasting obligation upon me, which I shall ever have a pride in acknowledging. "I am, Sir, &c.,

"G. BRISTOL."

Mr. Pitt to the Bishop of Bristol.

"Downing Street, Friday,

"MY LORD, Feb. 8, 1805.

"In answer to the letter which I have just had the honour of receiving from your Lordship, I am sorry

to be under the necessity of acquainting your Lordship that the report which has reached you respecting the See of Norwich has arisen without my knowledge, and that I cannot have the satisfaction of promoting your wishes.

"I have the honour, &c.,

"W. PITT."

At the same period the question of an Establishment for the Heiress Presumptive was decided. The Prince of Wales gave way, or rather came back to his first point. The entire charge of the young Princess, who was now brought to Windsor Castle, devolved upon the King. We find His Majesty, in writing to the Chancellor, mention Her Royal Highness again and again in terms of the warmest interest. "From what he has seen of his dear grand-daughter in the few days she has been here," the King says he doubts not "she will prove a blessing to her relations, and an honour to her native country." He adds: "Windsor will be her residence for the greatest part of the year, where she will have the advantage of excellent air and a retired garden, which will enable her quietly and with effect to pursue her studies, which certainly as yet have been but little attended to."[3]

Meanwhile the Session was in active progress. It had been opened on the 15th of January by the King in person. The Royal Speech announced the war with Spain, and promised some explanatory papers. It also announced the recent communication from the French Government, and the purport of the answer which had

[3] See these letters in Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 481.

been returned. And while calling for measures "to prosecute the war with vigour," the King desired to congratulate his Parliament on "the many proofs of the internal wealth and prosperity of the country."

No amendment to the Address was moved in either of the Houses. But it became evident from the speeches of Lord Grenville in the one, and of Mr. Fox in the other, that a most vigorous opposition was intended. Fox especially went over a great extent of ground. He complained that the Roman Catholic question was omitted. "I cannot help lamenting," he said, "that in the Speech from the Throne there is not one word expressive of an intention to recommend that subject to our consideration; a subject so important, that if it be not speedily taken into our consideration, no honest man can say there is anything like stability and security to that part of the British empire."

Fox next inveighed against the Additional Force Bill of last year; a measure which he said was now allowed to have totally failed. As to the Spanish war His Majesty had promised papers, and therefore to prejudge the question would be unwise. Yet, notwithstanding this preliminary sentence, Fox went on as follows: "I have, however, no difficulty in saying that the seizure of the Spanish frigates, loaded and destined as they were, does certainly bear an unseemly appearance, and one not much to the honour of this country."

On all these points the Minister replied with great spirit. He said: "The Hon. gentleman began with expressing his astonishment that the state of Ireland was not even alluded to, and argued that till the

situation of the Roman Catholics was taken into consideration, that country never can enjoy anything like tranquillity or repose. . . . . But I beg leave to ask how it comes to pass that though four years have elapsed since the Union, these measures, which the Hon. gentleman now so loudly calls for, have never been even once recommended? What is there at the present moment which renders those measures so necessary now that did not formerly suggest the propriety of their adoption? If he himself has entertained the same views which he professes to entertain, he could not consistently have suffered the subject to remain so long dormant. What the reasons are which have induced me, who entertain very different views of the subject, to suffer it to remain dormant, I shall, on a future occasion have an opportunity of stating; and I flatter myself that the House and the country will give me credit for consistency when I have stated the reasons which induce me still to think that the matter should remain dormant at the present moment.

"The Hon. gentleman has adverted to the Bill which I last Session introduced for the defence of the country, and has expressed a hope that some more efficient Bill will be substituted in its room. This is not the time for a discussion of the subject; but I feel myself called upon to state that I have seen no reason to alter my opinion of the grounds on which that Bill was founded. And though I admit that its effects in adding to the numbers of our military force have indeed been exceedingly small, nothing that has happened, considering all the circumstances under which the Bill was proposed,

and the principles on which it proceeded, induces me to think that it was not a measure which ought to have been adopted.

"As to the detention of the Spanish frigates, I am persuaded that when the papers are laid upon the table the Hon. gentleman and his friends will see reason to alter their opinion, and confess that their suspicions were erroneous. . . . . I am persuaded the House will clearly see in that transaction only an additional proof of the moderation and justice of His Majesty, who, in circumstances that would have warranted the most decided hostilities, wished as long as possible to leave the door open to conciliation, at the same time that he was absolutely bound to take such measures of precaution as not to allow an enemy already too formidable to acquire any additional means and resources to carry on the war."

Fox rose again upon the first point: "I wish," he said, "to explain why it is that I have not brought forward the subject of Catholic Emancipation. It is perfectly well understood that any man bringing forward this subject unconnected with the Ministry would have very little chance of gaining the object. It is, besides, very doubtful how far the measure would be acceptable to the Catholic body, if not taken up as a matter of justice and policy by the Executive Government."

With all due respect to Mr. Fox, it certainly does seem to me that his course upon this subject is hard to defend—hard even to make clear. In January, 1805, he held, as we have seen, the opinion that an inde-

pendent Member ought not to stir the question, since it would be unavailing. In February, 1806, he held with equal firmness the opinion that a Minister of the Crown ought not to stir it, since it must harass and wound the feelings of the King. It follows then that according to the views of Mr. Fox, the question during the reign of George the Third, and after the experience of 1801, ought not to be stirred at all; yet this is the very position which, when held by his great rival, he so bitterly arraigned.

All the topics which had been glanced at in the debate on the Address came on for discussion in a separate form, and in more detail. Thus, when the papers on the Spanish war had been for some time upon the table, Mr. Pitt brought forward a vote in direct approval of the course pursued. His speech was of two hours and a half. So was also the speech of Mr. Grey, who followed, and by whom an amendment was moved. This debate, which began on the 11th of February, continued through the next night, and did not close till past five in the morning. The result was a great triumph to the Government—much greater than the accession of the Addingtons suffices to explain. So clear and conclusive was thought the statement of Pitt, that it had an effect far beyond his immediate body of supporters. There was in that House, as in every House of Commons previous to the Reform Bill, a no small number of independent country gentlemen returned by close boroughs in their neighbourhood, who were not decisively bound to a particular party, and who on any great discussion voted as the arguments might incline. As regards the

origin of the Spanish war, and the detention of the Spanish frigates, all these gentlemen appear to have cast in their lot with Pitt. The amendment of Grey was rejected by no less than 313 votes against 106.

Much the same was the result in the House of Lords. There also, on the 11th of February, an Address was proposed by Lord Mulgrave, as Secretary of State, in approval of the course pursued. There also was brought forward an amendment which Lord Spencer moved and Lord Grenville supported. But only 36 Peers voted in its favour, while against it were arrayed 114.

On the Additional Force Bill, it was moved by Windham, on the 21st of February, that this and other Acts should be referred to a Select Committee. Canning spoke in reply, and as Pitt reported to the King, with especial force and success.[4] The debate was cut short by an early division, and the motion was rejected by 242 against 96.

On the 6th of March the debate was renewed by Sheridan in a still more pointed form—a motion to repeal the Additional Force Bill. Then Pitt himself stood forth in its defence. He showed that in point of fact the Bill had not come into practical operation until the 14th of November last. He showed also, looking at the last three months, that on an average of each week there had been nearly two hundred recruits obtained. "Thus," he said, "taking three months as an average, the result will be that, under the operation of the Bill, it will produce an annual addition

[4] See in my Appendix the King's reply, dated Feb. 22, 1805.

of betwixt nine and ten thousand men. I ask, then, Sir, with such a statement as this before us, if we can think of listening to a proposition for repealing the Bill just at the moment when it shall come into full activity? The Hon. gentleman has thought proper to say that not one man has been raised by the Bill, and the Right Hon. gentleman maintained that its effects had been altogether inconsiderable. But, Sir, I will ask these gentlemen and the House, whether the effect which I have hinted at be not one of very considerable magnitude?—whether it be not, in fact, nearly equal to the whole of the recruits obtained by the ordinary means of recruiting?"

But Pitt passed on to portray the common character of his opponent's speeches. "The Hon. gentleman seldom condescends to favour us with a display of his extraordinary powers of imagination and of fancy; but when he does, he always thinks proper to pay off all arrears, and, like a bottle just uncorked, bursts all at once into an explosion of froth and air. All that his own fancy can suggest or that he has collected from others; all that he can utter in the ebullition of the moment; all that he has slept on and studied, are combined and produced for our entertainment. All his hoarded repartees, all his matured jests; the full contents of his common-place book; all his severe invectives, all his bold, hardy assertions, he collects into one mass, which he kindles into a blaze of eloquence; and out it comes altogether, whether or not it has any, even the smallest relation to the subject in debate."

This last passage, I may observe, is by no means

fully given in the published Parliamentary Debates. I derive it in some part from the inscription under an excellent caricature by Gillray, which came out only four days afterwards, and which was entitled "Uncorking Old Sherry." Here Pitt appears, a corkscrew in his hand, and between his knees a bottle, out of which peeps the head of Sheridan. The "froth and air" is scattered all abroad.

The Minister did not, however, entirely confine himself to a defence of his own measure, or a description of Sheridan's eloquence. As Sheridan had expatiated on the general field of politics, so did Pitt also. As Sheridan had claimed credit for the numerous votes which he had given to Addington's administration, so Pitt on the contrary declared that in his judgment Sheridan's had been a hollow and insidious support.

These words, levelled at a man of shining genius, already by some previous attacks incensed, were by that genius encountered, and flung back with the greatest skill. It may remind the reader of a similar attack and a similar retort twenty-two years before, with the very same antagonist[5]—the one attack near the outset, the other, alas, how near the close of Pitt's career! Sheridan was extremely stung. It is told of him that while the debate was still proceeding, he went up into Bellamy's supper-room. There he ordered a bottle of Madeira, poured it into a bowl, and drank it off.[6] Thus was he primed when, at nearly three in the

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[5] Look back to vol. i. p. 97.

[6] Descriptive Account of Gillray's Caricatures, by Thomas Wright, Esq., p. 236, ed. 1851.

morning, the other speeches had concluded, and Sheridan rose to reply. He adverted to the expression "insidious support" which Pitt had used. "I hope," he said, "it is not my character to give support of that description. I gave my support to the late administration because I approved of many of their measures; but principally was I induced to support them because I considered their continuance in office as a security against the return to power of the Right Hon. gentleman opposite, which ever appeared to me as the greatest national calamity."

The author of the *Rivals* was by no means satisfied with this single taunt. Putting forth all his admirable powers of satire, he drew a fanciful contrast between his own support of Addington and that which Pitt had given. He accused Pitt of having tapered off from his promised adherence as soon as he found that Addington was acquiring popularity. He accused him of combining for the overthrow of Addington with others, whom he meant also to betray. And he declared by a form of implication that Pitt had "merited the contempt and execration of all good men." The minute narrative which I have given of all these preceding transactions will, I trust, have shown the reader how absolutely void of all foundation was this bitter diatribe. It may incline us here to say of Sheridan, as he once said of another Member, that he was indebted to his memory for his jests, and to his imagination for his facts. But it is no wonder if at the time a speech so pungent and so powerful found high favour with the disappointed and angry partisans who sat around him.

Still, however, on the merits of the question—the Additional Force Bill—as on the merits of the Spanish War, there appeared a large preponderance of numbers on the side of Pitt. When Sheridan sat down, the House proceeded to divide, and with the following result:—

For Mr. Sheridan's motion. .	127
Against it	267
Majority . . .	140

On another night Pitt, and Fox, and Sheridan, all three voted together, and yet were in the minority. This was on the renewed motion of Wilberforce for the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Pitt had earnestly advised his friend, considering the state of parties, to refrain from bringing it forward; but Wilberforce, impelled by a solemn sense of duty, persevered. The two rival leaders were steady, but the adherents both of Pitt and Fox appear to have stayed away in considerable numbers.

The division was—

For the amendment	77
Against it.	70
Majority against the Bill .	7

"I never felt so much on any Parliamentary occasion," writes Wilberforce in his journal.

On the 18th of February Mr. Pitt brought forward his last Budget. There were vast expenses to provide

for. The Army and Militia Estimates were above eighteen millions and a half. Large as was this sum, it fell a little short of the Vote in the preceding year. The Ordnance Estimates were nearly five millions, the Navy above fourteen millions and a half. The Miscellaneous Services would require a million and a half. "But," said Pitt, "there is yet another article of Supply. . . . . Gentlemen are aware that we have been engaged in a Continental intercourse and correspondence. . . . It must be the wish of every man who hears me that this intercourse and correspondence should be so pursued as to restore peace upon grounds calculated to produce and establish that ultimate security which is the object of all our wishes and all our efforts. But seeing what we do see, and knowing what we do know, it would indeed, Sir, be rash and presumptuous in us to entertain an expectation that this great object can be attained without further sacrifices on our part. Feeling it to be my duty not to postpone the general Supply for the service of the year, I have thought it of extreme importance to make such an addition to it as to enable His Majesty to afford with effect any succours which it may be necessary to afford. I state them at five millions."

To provide for these certain Estimates and that possible Subsidy, amounting on the whole to upwards of forty-four millions, besides the interest upon the public debts, it became necessary in the first place to continue all War Taxes, and, above all, the Property Tax, the produce of which for the year was reckoned by Pitt as 6,300,000*l*. It became necessary to contract a new

Loan of 20,000,000*l.*; and to meet the interest upon that Loan it became necessary to impose new taxes to the amount of at least one million a year.

The new taxes brought forward for this object by the Minister were of divers kind. There was an addition to the rates of postage of one penny for a single letter, of twopence for a double, and of threepence for a treble letter. There was an increase of the tax upon salt; five shillings a bushel in addition to the ten already paid. There was an increase of duty, though according to different rates, on both the horses kept for pleasure and the horses kept for husbandry.

"The last tax I have to propose," said Pitt, "is an increase in the duty upon Legacies. My first proposal will be to impose a small sum upon direct legacies on which no duty is paid now: the sum I wish is one per cent. Gentlemen will see that it must be difficult to estimate the amount of this tax. By a rough guess the amount of capital bequeathed in wills registered is annually about thirty millions. Deducting five millions for legacies charged on land, and five millions collaterally, twenty millions will then remain, which, at one per cent., will give a produce of 200,000*l.* The next is to supply an omission in the Act which could not be intentional—I mean the Legacies charged on Land. I propose to subject them to the same tax, and that, I calculate, will yield 100,000*l.* The only other addition is on Legacies to strangers in blood. I propose to raise the duty on Legacies of this description from eight to ten per cent., which will furnish a sum of 30,000*l.*"

On the Budget night Mr. Fox was the only person, besides the Minister, who spoke, but there was a fuller debate on the night of the Report. Fox laid in his claim to controvert on a future day the policy as well as the amount or application of the Subsidy to Foreign Powers. He found fault with the taxes, and, above all, with the tax upon Property. "For my part," he said, "I prefer taxes on wine, tea, or other articles of consumption, to proceeding on dangerous principles, taking by little and little from the property of the subject, till the reduction is tantamount to the risk of the whole. I remember a fable which, to elucidate the force of habit, relates that a woman in a certain village had a calf which she accustomed herself to carry in her arms every day, and from the gradual increase was able to bear it when it came to be a large ox. The fable is a good one, but I do not like it in its application to the present case; for however we might be able to bear this little calf, we could not possibly bear the great fat ox it would grow to."

This argument as to the possible absorption of the entire national property, even though fortified by a good story, was dealt with by Mr. Pitt very shortly. For only one single sentence was heard from him in reply. "I think it sufficient to quiet the Hon. Gentleman's alarms to say, that in order to come to the point he stated we must continue at war no less than ninety-four years!"

It may be added, that neither on that night, nor on any other, did Fox attempt to divide the House against the Taxes he condemned. They all passed with much

facility, except only the Duty upon Husbandry Horses, against which the landed gentlemen combined. On the 12th of March it was thrown out in a thin House by a small majority, the numbers being 76 against 73. Next day the Speaker, calling to see the Minister upon other business, mentioned this defeat. "I shall be prepared," said Pitt, "with another tax to supply its place, to be carried through before Easter, about which time the Subsidy question will be ready."

Ten days afterwards, accordingly, Pitt brought forward what he called his Supplemental Budget. He proposed a great variety of small Duties to the aggregate amount of 400,000*l.* a year, and these he carried without difficulty.

On the whole then, in the first two months and upwards of the Session, the course of business had been very triumphant for the Ministry. There had been many other debates besides those I have enumerated, as on the Army Estimates, and on a Bill to suspend still further the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. In most of these Mr. Pitt had only scant assistance from his colleagues in the House of Commons; but his own speeches were very frequent, and maintained all their former ascendency.

Such exertions, however, could not be made without a heavy strain upon his health and strength. He had hoped for an interval at Easter to go and drink the waters at Bath. There, as the following letter shows, he was secure of a cordial welcome, and of two most intelligent companions.

Lord Harrowby to Mr. Pitt.

"6, Laura Place, Bath,
March 31, 1805.

"DEAR PITT,

"I have just heard from Richard[7] that you cough and look ill, which I do not like at all; but I should have liked it much less if his intelligence were not accompanied with an intimation that you talk seriously of a long Easter Recess, and propose spending it at Bath. This is a most excellent project, I hope I may say resolution; and I trust you will not allow anything to divert you from it. If you do, you sin against your own conviction and experience; and must, I fear, suffer much and severe punishment in the latter part of the Session. That will not, I hope, be long; but it may be sufficiently troublesome to make it very important that you should be a giant refreshed.

"We shall remain here at least till the middle of Easter week, at the end of which a rendezvous with Wyatt will carry me into Staffordshire. I depend upon your making use of me in getting you a house, unless you can be satisfied with a bedroom, dressing-cabinet, and parlour, all on the ground floor, which would be at your service, without in the slightest degree cramping us, either till you can suit yourself, or (which would be much better) as long as we remain.

"Yours very sincerely,

"HARROWBY.

"Lady H. is angry with me for not saying how much pleasure it would give us to have you under our own roof, such as it is: as I tell her, *que cela va sans dire.*"

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[7] The Hon. Richard Ryder.

But Mr. Pitt had here once again to postpone the care of health to that of business. The House of Commons could make no long adjournment at Easter. Still less could the Minister leave town. He was now on the brink of a transaction beyond comparison the most painful to him personally of any in his public career.

CHAPTER XLI.

1805.

Naval administration of Lord Melville — Tenth Report of the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry — Ministerial differences — Whitbread's Resolutions — Resignation of Lord Melville — Succeeded by Sir Charles Middleton — Discussions between Pitt and Lord Sidmouth — The King supports Pitt — The Tenth Report referred to a Select Committee — Lord Melville removed from the Privy Council — Revival of the Roman Catholic claims — Speeches of Grattan and Pitt — Diplomatic negotiations — Arrival of M. de Novosiltzoff in London — Treaty between Russia and England — Lord Melville impeached — Rejection of Whitbread's motion against Pitt — Final resignation of Lords Sidmouth and Buckinghamshire — Ministerial arrangements — The King's decay of sight.

LORD MELVILLE, at the head of the Admiralty, had evinced his usual sagacity and his usual vigour. He had found the stores and materials for the navy scattered by the improvident system of his immediate predecessor. Here is one instance of the consequences as related by himself in the House of Lords: "Let us see what was done by the late Board of Admiralty with respect to the building ships of the line from February, 1801, to May, 1804. In that period it appears that five ships of the line were ordered to be built in the King's yards, and two in the merchant yards. But when I inquired into the state of these five ships of the line so ordered to be built in the King's yards, I found that not

even the keel of any one of them had been laid down; and the reason given for this delay was, that the ships could not be proceeded on without more materials and more hands."[1] There was strange inconsistency too as well as strange improvidence. It appears that on the 29th of December, 1802, Lord St. Vincent had written, in his own hand, to Sir Andrew Hamond, with a sharp rebuke in not having bestirred himself more actively, as "urgent necessity" required, to enter into contracts for building some seventy-fours in the merchants' yards. Sir Andrew did bestir himself accordingly, when, to his great astonishment, only a fortnight afterwards, he received an Order from the Board of Admiralty, perhaps in Lord St. Vincent's temporary absence, telling him that the measure could on no account be allowed; that contracts were not to be made; that ships of the line were not to be built any where except in the King's yards!

It was now the part of Lord Melville to retrieve the errors of a most weak administrator, though victorious Admiral. He bought up in all directions materials of every kind, from timber down to hemp, for even hemp was wanting. He aroused a new activity in the works at the King's yards, and pending their revival, contracted for several seventy-four gun ships, to be built in the merchants' yards. The results of his naval administration, which began in May, 1804, were summed up by himself as follows, when he addressed the House of

[1] Debate in the House of Lords on the Earl of Darnley's motion, May 24, 1805.

Lords in May, 1805: "So that the whole force, either actually added or in a state of forwardness, appears to amount to one hundred and sixty-eight vessels more than there were on the day of my succeeding to the office of First Lord of the Admiralty." Nor was this all: "In the course of ten months, that is from the 15th of May, 1804, to the date of the Returns now on your Lordships' table, six hundred and one vessels have been docked, repaired, and refitted."

During the administration of Mr. Addington there had been some decline in the cordial feeling and the constant intercourse between Mr. Pitt and Lord Melville. They were never again so intimate as they had been before. But Mr. Pitt ever estimated at the highest rate Lord Melville's talents and experience. If at the outset of his last Ministry he had been asked who among his Cabinet colleagues were likely to give him the most efficient aid, he would probably have named, besides Lord Castlereagh in the Commons, Lord Harrowby and Lord Melville in the Peers.

Nor was Pitt disappointed in his expectations of his early friend. The navy in Lord Melville's hands was, as I have shown, rapidly rising from its late depression, and becoming to the Government, in a party sense, a further claim to the public confidence and favour. It was natural, however, that in the same proportion as Lord Melville was serviceable to the Government he should be disrelished by the Opposition. It was natural that they should seize an occasion to strike him, if they could, a blow; and such an occasion was now most unexpectedly afforded.

To explain the transaction now before us, it must, in the first place, be remembered that at the close of 1802 Lord St. Vincent, acting certainly from most laudable motives, had appointed a Commission of Naval Inquiry. The Commissioners sent in successively ten Reports.[2] The first nine were for the most part of a technical character, and of little general interest; but the tenth was understood, even before it was made public, to bear upon the conduct of Lord Melville as Treasurer of the Navy —a post which, in Mr. Pitt's first administration, he had held conjointly with other and higher offices.

To the appearance, therefore, of this Tenth Report both parties in the State were anxiously looking. No man felt more anxious than Pitt himself. As it chanced, Wilberforce was calling on him at his office, and pressing him for the promised Order of Council against the Guiana Slave Trade, on the same morning that the first copy was brought in. "I shall never forget," says Wilberforce, "the way in which he seized it, and how eagerly he looked into the leaves without waiting even to cut them open."[3]

The perusal no doubt must have caused him the utmost pain. In the first place it was clearly shown that Mr. Alexander Trotter, appointed Paymaster in that department by Lord Melville, had misapplied the public money. Sums derived from the revenue had been paid to his own account with his private bankers, Messrs.

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[2] The first ten Reports of the Commissioners are printed at length in the 3rd volume of the new series of Parliamentary Debates, pp. 865–1212.

[3] Life, by his Sons, vol. iii. p. 218.

Coutts, and employed in his private ventures. Mr. Trotter subsequently urged to the Commissioners that, after all, the public had not sustained any loss from his use of the money issued for the naval service. But the Commissioners properly state that they cannot allow any weight to this observation. Mr. Trotter might have been unsuccessful in his speculations, or the bankers with whom he lodged the public money might have failed in business; and in either case the loss would probably have fallen on the nation.

Thus far the case is clear. It must also be admitted that Lord Melville, when he permitted, or at least did not forbid, Mr. Trotter to keep a part of the public money at his private banker's, gave an undue sanction to a lax and most pernicious system of account. So far as regards that point Lord Melville might be justly held culpable. But as regards the rest the case was otherwise, as Lord Melville's own letter perhaps will best explain. It was inserted in the Tenth Report.

Lord Melville to the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry.

"GENTLEMEN, "Wimbledon, June 30, 1804.

"It is impossible for me to furnish you with the account you ask. It is more than four years since I left the office of Treasurer of the Navy, and at the period of doing so, having accounted for every sum imprested into my hands, I transferred the whole existing balance to the account of my successor. From that time I never considered any one paper or voucher that remained in my hands as of the smallest use to myself or any other person; and consequently, being often in the practice,

since I retired to Scotland, of employing occasionally some time in assorting my papers, and destroying those that were useless, I am satisfied there does not exist any one material by which I could make up such an account as you specify. But independently of that circumstance, I think it right to remind you that during a great part of the time I was Treasurer of the Navy, I held other very confidential situations in Government, and was intimately connected with others. So situated, I did not decline giving occasional accommodation from the funds in the Treasurer's hands to other services not connected with my official situation as Treasurer of the Navy. If I had materials to make up such an account as you require, I could not do it without disclosing delicate and confidential transactions of Government, which my duty to the public must have restrained me from revealing. "I have the honour, &c.,

"MELVILLE."

It appears, then, that these advances of public money by Lord Melville as Treasurer of the Navy were connected with some questions of Secret Service at a most critical period of both Foreign and Home affairs. On the other hand, his adversaries did not scruple to assert that he had used these sums of money, or the interest from them, to his own private profit and emolument. Such is an outline of the case on which, in the ensuing year, Lord Melville was brought to solemn trial before his Peers. As it seems to me, there is no good ground whatever to dispute the justice of the sentence which, on that occasion, the House pronounced. Then of the Peers present, a majority which on all the charges, ten in number, was large, and which on some of them was

overwhelming, said "Not Guilty on my honour."—"Not Guilty" is the sentence which, as I think, the voice of History should re-echo.

The charges against Lord Melville were indeed not only unsupported by his conduct, but also, it may be said, repugnant to his character. His faults were not at all of a mean and calculating kind. They were the very opposite of selfish and sordid. If he was unthrifty in his control of the public accounts, so to his detriment he was also in his own.

I have here been led to speak of the case as it stood at its conclusion, after all the evidence was produced, after all the explanations were afforded. But I must now revert to it as it stood at its commencement on the publication of the Tenth Report. In fairness we are bound, as I think, to acknowledge that ever since Parliamentary parties have existed, scarce any Opposition would have hesitated, waiving all further investigation, to snatch up such a weapon and to aim it at their political foes. It became at once manifest to the Ministers that their colleague would be most seriously assailed. Mr. Whitbread, though as it chanced absent for some days, gave notice through his brother-in-law, Mr. Grey, that on the 8th of April he should bring forward a motion founded on the Tenth Report. He had at first designed a Committee of Inquiry, but emboldened by the spirit which he saw around him, he drew up ready to move a series of eleven Resolutions condemning in the strongest language the conduct of Lord Melville.

Here is a note from Mr. Canning in preparation for the coming onset:

Mr. Canning to Mr. Pitt.

"Somerset House, Saturday, March 23.

"Can you lend me the Reports of the Commissioners of 1786? Those of 82 and of 97 I have, but those of 86 are not to be found at any bookseller's in town.

"Shall you have half an hour this morning, or in the earlier part of to-morrow—that is before three or four (as I dine at Blackheath)?

"You are not aware of half the strength of the defence that may be made.

"If T.[4] and L^d. M.[5] had either said *everything* or *nothing*, there would have been no difficulty.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"G. C."

But though Canning himself was firm, many others wavered. The very notice of the motion impending produced a ferment, and well nigh a schism, not only in the Ministerial party, but in the Ministry itself. Pitt was from the first resolved to defend his colleague. In vain did some of his personal friends in the House of Commons declare themselves undecided as to their own votes, and press him to leave Lord Melville to his fate. Wilberforce and Bankes especially went together to Downing Street upon this painful errand. As the former tells it, "We saw Pitt on Melville's business, and talked to him above an hour; Bankes very frank, and Pitt very good-humoured." But they made no impression. "In truth," said Wilberforce long after-

[4] Trotter.

[5] Lord Melville.

wards, "Pitt was chiefly led into supporting Melville by that false principle of honour which was his great fault."[6]

Here Mr. Wilberforce was mistaken. It was not chiefly from a sense of honour, true or false, that Pitt proceeded. He believed his friend to be innocent of the main charges brought against him. He could not indeed deny a culpable laxity in the superintendence of Mr. Trotter's accounts; but he was quite sure, and so he said to Wilberforce, that there had been in Lord Melville nothing of personal corruption—in his own words, "no real pocketing of public money." It is strange that Wilberforce, who has recorded this saying also, did not perceive its application to Pitt's conduct in this case. For since Pitt was firmly convinced of Lord Melville's personal integrity in these transactions, he was bound not in honour only, but in conscience and in duty, to stand forth as his defender.

Within the Cabinet there was no less dissension. Lord Sidmouth in the last year of his administration had become very hostile to Lord Melville. He had observed, with some resentment, the same statesman on whom he had conferred a peerage foremost among those who planned and who achieved his overthrow. Therefore, while desiring, as he always did, to act justly and fairly, he read the Tenth Report with an unfavourable bias lurking in his mind. When Mr. Pitt asked his opinion upon it, Lord Sidmouth answered that he thought it not only improbable but impossible

[6] Life, by his Sons, vol. iii. p. 218 and 220.

for Lord Melville to clear himself with the public. "I tell you this," he said, "without reserve, as an opinion that I have not as yet communicated to any other person. I have not talked upon the subject with my own friends to bind, or even to sound them, but I can have little doubt of their sentiments; and I would warn you of the danger of committing yourself in a defence of Lord Melville, by which you will hurt yourself with the nation, and will make it necessary for me to resign my place in your Ministry."

"That would be destruction," rejoined Mr. Pitt. "If your friends in the House of Commons concur in the proposed Vote of Censure, it must and will be carried."

"Then," said Lord Sidmouth, "to avert the necessity on my part and on theirs, the only course to be taken is to refer the inquiry to a Select Committee."[7]

Nothing was decided at this interview. But Lord Sidmouth called again on Pitt to press once more the point of a Committee. Lord Hawkesbury from the first, and subsequently Lord Castlereagh, also judged this to be the most advisable course. Pitt at last acquiesced in it, provided Lord Melville's consent should be previously given. Lord Melville would of course have much preferred a direct negative to the Vote of Censure, but when he found that there was no prospect of a majority to such a negative, he agreed, though with reluctance, to the other plan proposed. A Cabinet being held at four o'clock on Sunday, the 7th of April,

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[7] This conversation is given by the Speaker from Lord Sidmouth's own mouth. (Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 546.)

the Committee was finally adopted as the counter proposal of the Government, and on that basis Lord Sidmouth answered for the continued adhesion of his friends.

Next day, the 8th, after an anxious *whip*, and in a most crowded House, Mr. Whitbread brought forward his motion in a speech of three hours. When he sat down, and when the question was put on the first of his eleven Resolutions, the Prime Minister rose. Seeking to keep together his majority, he did not argue to vindicate Lord Melville on each particular charge. He rather applied himself to show that in justice to the statesman accused, each charge required further evidence and explanations, such as a Select Committee would impart, before it was submitted to the final decision of the House. He concluded by moving the previous question, and declared that should this be carried, he would then further propose the appointment of the Committee he had mentioned.

Next to Pitt's came a speech from Lord Henry Petty; a speech of signal ability, and fulfilling all that early promise which Pitt had been among the first to mark. Now compliments to Lord Henry came in from all sides. Thus from Tierney, who spoke later: "It is a matter of pride to any man to be allowed to call himself the friend of such rising talents and eloquence."

Let me here interrupt my narrative to notice that such signs of success in Lord Henry must have cheered the closing hours of his father, Pitt's first political chief. The Marquis of Lansdowne, better known to posterity as the Earl of Shelburne, died within a month of this time.

He expired on the 7th of May, 1805, at the age of sixty-eight.

I now revert to the debate in the House of Commons of the 7th of April. In its progress both Mr. Fox, and an able ally whom he had received from Ireland, Mr. George Ponsonby, exerted their powers of debate against Lord Melville. On the other hand, Mr. Spencer Perceval, Mr. Canning, and Lord Castlereagh followed the line of Mr. Pitt, and did their best for their absent friend. Still, however, the independent Members looked grave, and shook their heads. They had been accustomed by Pitt himself to the most scrupulous precision and purity on all points of public money; they did not like Lord Melville's case so far as they could understand it; and for their guidance they looked mainly to the decision of Mr. Wilberforce, whose conscientious and impartial turn of mind commanded their just respect.

It was, therefore, amidst no common thrill of expectation that late at night Mr. Wilberforce rose. He had waited until almost the last to hear and to weigh all the arguments adduced in support of a Committee. He sat at the extremity of the Treasury Bench, and he related long afterwards, that when he rose and turned towards the Chair, he looked just across Mr. Pitt, and observed him listen with intense earnestness to catch the first intimation of the course which he would take. "It required no little effort," added Wilberforce, "to resist the fascination of that penetrating eye—from which Lord Erskine was always thought to shrink." But he did not leave the House long in doubt. In his very

first sentence he declared that he must vote for the original motion. He was strongly impressed, he said, with the culpable conduct of Lord Melville, and could not refuse to satisfy the moral sense of England.

Such a speech from such a man was decisive of the question. It rallied to itself nearly all the independent members, as, for example, Sir Robert Peel. At four in the morning the House in breathless silence proceeded to divide, when the numbers were found to be exactly equal:

For the Motion	216
Against it	216

Not for many years, I think, on a question of any thing like the same importance, had it been found requisite to appeal in this manner to the Speaker's casting-vote.

Thus appealed to, the Speaker, in great anxiety of mind and after some minutes of doubt and deliberation, gave his vote in favour of Mr. Whitbread's motion. Thus the first of his Resolutions was declared to be carried.

The Opposition, which all through this year had been used to small minorities, hailed their hard-won triumph with a burst of tumultuous joy. One red-coat squire, Sir Thomas Mostyn, raised what he called a *view-hollo*, and cried out, "We have killed the fox!"[8] So much for the judicial temper of some at least among the judges!

The remaining Resolutions of Mr. Whitbread were

[8] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 338.

next put and carried. Mr. Pitt strove to leave out the concluding words of the eleventh, stating that Lord Melville "has been guilty of a gross violation of the law and a high breach of duty." For these words Mr. Pitt wished to substitute "has acted contrary to the intentions of the said Act." Some debate ensued, and the gallery was cleared for a division; but finding that he could not prevail, the Minister finally gave way without calling for the numbers.

When the Resolutions had been carried, and while the strangers were still shut out, Mr. Whitbread rose again, and moved an Address to the King for removing Lord Melville from his Councils. At the time when the gallery was again opened Mr. Pitt was proposing to put off any further consideration of the charge till the day but one after—that is, the Wednesday following. "I will agree to the postponement," cried Fox, "provided the House be also adjourned to that day; for I will not consent to the House doing any business whatever whilst the public affairs remain in the hands of a disgraced Ministry." Pitt answered with perfect calmness: "Certainly, in every view of the case it is better that the House should adjourn to Wednesday next." Then, at half-past five in the morning, the House rose.

Some further details of this important night are supplied by the Note Book of Lord Fitzharris, afterwards second Earl of Malmesbury, and then one of the Treasury Board:

"I sat wedged close to Pitt himself the night when we were 216 to 216; and the Speaker, Abbot (after looking as white as a sheet, and pausing for ten

minutes), gave the casting vote *against* us. Pitt immediately put on the little cocked hat that he was in the habit of wearing when dressed for the evening, and jammed it deeply over his forehead, and I distinctly saw the tears trickling down his cheeks. We had overheard one or two, such as Colonel Wardle (of notorious memory), say they would see 'how Billy looked after it.' A few young ardent followers of Pitt, with myself, locked their arms together, and formed a circle, in which he moved, I believe unconsciously, out of the House; and neither the Colonel nor his friends could approach him."

Before the close of the Tuesday Lord Melville took the only course which a man of honour could take when thus assailed—he resigned his office as First Lord of the Admiralty. When, therefore, the Commons met again on Wednesday, Pitt had no sooner come in and taken his seat on the Treasury Bench than he rose again and announced the fact. But Mr. Whitbread was not yet satisfied. He persevered in making his promised speech; and he concluded with his promised motion—an Address to the King to remove Lord Melville from all offices held under the Crown, and from His Majesty's councils and presence for ever.

A long and interesting debate ensued. Some members of the Opposition threw out an idea that Lord Melville had resigned only to get rid of the motion then before them, and would be reinstated if once the motion were withdrawn. On that point Mr. Pitt, who spoke to that point only, was perfectly explicit:

"I have no hesitation at all, accordingly, in saying

that all idea of the Noble Lord's return to power is completely annihilated, and that no danger whatever need be apprehended from that quarter. When I make this frank declaration, I only wish it to be understood that this is not to be taken as continuing in force in case the Resolutions of Monday should, on future inquiries, be found to have been premature, and should accordingly be erased from the journals of the House. In any other case but this I think it is absolutely impossible that any Minister should ever think of recommending the Noble Lord to a share in His Majesty's councils. After this declaration, I do think that the motion of the Hon. gentleman might be dispensed with, without at all losing sight of the object he professes to have in view."

As the debate proceeded, it became quite clear, and so the Speaker notes, that the House was not prepared for so strong a vote until the rest of the inquiry had been gone through. Seeing this, Mr. Whitbread withdrew his motion. But it was agreed unanimously to lay the former Resolutions before His Majesty, and to carry them up by the whole House. Pitt gave notice that next day after that duty had been performed, he would move the adjournment of the House for the Easter Recess of one fortnight only.

Next day, accordingly, the Speaker followed by many Members went up with the Resolutions to St. James's. None of the Ministers were present, nor yet the chiefs of the Opposition; neither Fox, nor Grey, nor Sheridan, nor Windham, nor Thomas Grenville. Whitbread sent

an apology alleging indisposition. Then the House adjourned until the 25th.

Thus fell from his high estate Henry Dundas, Lord Viscount Melville. He fell, but he carried with him as he well deserved the warm attachment of his friends. In his own native country above all, and for many years after he had ceased to be, his name was—may I not say is?—held in grateful honour. So late as 1826 we find no less a man than Sir Walter Scott compare him much to his advantage with some of his successors in office: "Ah! Hal Dundas, there was no truckling in thy day!"[9]

The question was now by whom to supply his place at the Admiralty. Several names were suggested to Pitt by Lord Sidmouth and others of his colleagues. The object of Lord Sidmouth was to appoint Lord Buckinghamshire, Lord Hawkesbury, or some person already in office, so as to make room for one of his friends or relatives, Bond, Bragge Bathurst, or Hiley. It was an object which, from the terms of his accession to the Government, he was perfectly well entitled to pursue, but which in the actual stress of that Government he might have done better to postpone.

Pitt on his part was greatly pained to see interrupted the measures in full progress for the economical and vigorous administration of the navy in time of war. In planning these measures, now not far from their completion, Lord Melville had much relied on a deserving,

[9] Diary, March 1, 1826. Life, by Lockhart, vol. viii. p. 273.

though not distinguished admiral, Sir Charles Middleton. As I have elsewhere mentioned, Sir Charles had been one of the very first to combine with Wilberforce for the abolition of the Slave Trade[1]—on that point, as on some others, a striking contrast to Lord St. Vincent, than whom the Slave Trade to the close had no more eager or more thorough-going friend. Though now past fourscore, Sir Charles had still considerable energy both of body and mind.

Since then, as Wilberforce puts it, perhaps a little too strongly, "Lord Melville's plans for the naval force of the kingdom were in fact Sir Charles's," it seemed to Pitt, that as a temporary, though not lasting appointment, Sir Charles's might be upon the whole the best. Within a few months Sir Charles might complete the administrative measures which he had aided in planning, and by that time the storm against the Government raised by the Tenth Report would no doubt have passed away.

It was natural, considering the high esteem of Lord Melville for Sir Charles Middleton, to suppose that Lord Melville had advised his appointment. Sir Charles himself was under the belief that he had done so. But we have the direct assertion of Mr. Pitt to the contrary. Mr. Pitt stated that the idea was entirely his own, and altogether independent of or anterior to any opinion that Lord Melville had expressed.[2]

The following correspondence ensued.

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[1] See vol. i. p. 367. Compare on this point Wilberforce's Life, vol. iii. p. 223, with Lord Sidmouth's, vol. ii. p. 364.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Sidmouth.

"Downing Street, Sunday night,
"DEAR LORD SIDMOUTH, April 21, 1805.

"It is become impossible to delay longer the decision respecting the Admiralty; and after weighing all the alternatives, I end at last in thinking that the appointment of Sir Charles Middleton (though not without some objections) is, on the whole, the best for the essential and pressing points of the naval service at this moment, and liable to less inconvenience than any other that has presented itself. I am therefore writing to-night to the King, to submit to him this opinion as the best I can form. I wish there was more chance than I am afraid there is of your thinking that I have decided right.

"A Cabinet is summoned for twelve to-morrow, in consequence of the further communications which we received yesterday from Woronzow, of the same date with those of Lord G. Leveson, but more particular and much more promising. Is there any chance of your coming to it before you set out to Windsor?

"Yours affectionately,
"W. PITT."

Lord Sidmouth to Mr. Pitt.

"Richmond Park, April 22,
"MY DEAR SIR, ½ past 12.

"I deplore the choice which you have made. It will, I fear, have the effect of weakening and lowering the Government, at a time when it is peculiarly important to give it additional strength, and to raise its character. To me it is a decisive proof that my continuance in office could neither be useful to the public, nor honourable to myself: an opinion to which I have

long been compelled to incline, and which is confirmed by this arrangement and the circumstances with which it is attended. My own earnest wish is to withdraw from public life.

. . . . . .

"Yours affectionately,

"SIDMOUTH."

On the same day we find Lord Sidmouth write to his brother Hiley that the selection of Sir Charles was most objectionable, as he said it was "to forego the means of making an arrangement conformable to the pledge given to me in December last." On this ground and on some others, Lord Sidmouth thought himself fully justified in having resigned, and in that resignation he was next day joined by his follower the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Mr. Pitt and Lord Sidmouth were now meeting at Windsor Castle, where there was an Installation of Knights of the Garter, the first since July, 1771, and conducted on a scale of great magnificence. The two statesmen had then the opportunity of some private talk, and the Prime Minister earnestly pressed his colleague to reconsider his determination. Meanwhile it was hoped by the friends of both parties that the affair would be kept private. But it was not. It was publicly canvassed at the annual Academy Dinner upon the 27th. "I was well electrified," so next day wrote Auckland to Abbot, "when I found that a secret on which you and I had not ventured to speak, even to each other, was well known in an assembly of two hundred politicians and painters."

Next day, however, the two statesmen met at Richmond Park, and had a full discussion. Lord Sidmouth on his part and on Lord Buckinghamshire's was prevailed upon to remain in office. "I have consented to make the experiment," he said. This he did on three conditions. He was to be at liberty to tell his friends: first, that Sir Charles's appointment was only temporary; secondly, that Mr. Pitt was determined to give to the public the full benefit of the Reports of Naval Inquiry; and thirdly, that Lord Sidmouth's friends should be free to vote as they pleased, and that every consideration should be shown to their "just and admitted pretensions."[3]

The King at this time declared in writing, that had any disunion arisen in the Cabinet, he should have decidedly taken part with Mr. Pitt, as he "has every reason to be satisfied with his conduct from the hour of his returning to his service."[4]

Meanwhile the appointment of Sir Charles had been sanctioned by the King, and formally made. He was raised to the Peerage as Lord Barham, with remainder to his daughter and only child, who had married Sir Gerard Noel.

Meanwhile also the House of Commons had met again, and had immediately resumed the business of Lord Melville. On the very first night Mr. Whitbread rose to inquire whether the Right Hon. gentleman opposite intended to recommend to His Majesty to expunge the

[3] Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 364; and Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 554.

[4] Letter dated April 30, 1805. See Appendix.

name of Lord Melville from the list of the Privy Council. Pitt answered that he had no such intention. It seemed, he said, to be the sense of the House, when the affair was last discussed, that a removal from any place of trust and confidence would be sufficient till further light was thrown upon the subject by the investigations of a Select Committee.

Whitbread rose at once to announce that he would raise the Privy Council question on a future day; and he then proceeded to move that the Tenth Report should be referred to a Select Committee. Pitt said that he entirely approved of the reference, but desired that it should be confined to certain points in the Tenth Report; for since, as he understood, the Hon. gentleman designed to move for a prosecution by the Attorney-General on certain other points in that Report, the two modes of procedure ought certainly not to be concurrent in their objects.

A long debate ensued upon this subject, but, on dividing, Pitt prevailed by 229 votes against 151. He prevailed also the same evening, by 251 against 120, that the Committee should be chosen by ballot, and not proposed by name. On the 30th of April the members so chosen were accordingly appointed, though not without another sharp debate; and the Committee was then at liberty to proceed upon its labours.

The case of Lord Melville, like almost every other important question when freely discussed, came, as it proceeded, to be mixed up and entangled with many subordinate details. There was presented an Eleventh Report from the Commissioners of Naval Inquiry. There was a

charge, first urged by Mr. Grey, of a libel on the House by the *Oracle* newspaper, which had warmly espoused Lord Melville's cause; and the editor, Mr. Peter Stuart, was committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms. There was also made public a case of the year 1797, when Mr. Pitt, without, as was alleged, due sanction of law, though with Mr. Dundas's consent, had borrowed upon security 40,000*l.* surplus of Naval money, to enable Messrs. Boyd and Benfield, as contractors, to make good an instalment due upon their loan. On this affair Mr. Pitt himself gave evidence before the Select Committee; and it afterwards formed, as will be seen, the subject of a separate motion in the House of Commons.

The motion of Mr. Whitbread on the Privy Council stood fixed for the 6th of May. Some persons perhaps may think as did the King:—"It is unbecoming the character of Englishmen, who naturally, when a man is fallen, are too noble to pursue their blows." But at the time there were many Members inclining to carry to the utmost their war against Lord Melville. From several quarters did Pitt receive intimations that in all probability he would be again defeated. Still he was determined at all hazards to sustain his early friend. At this juncture, however, he received a letter as follows:—

Lord Melville to Mr. Pitt.

"MY DEAR SIR, "Wimbledon, May 5, 1805.

"From the accounts in the newspapers of what passed in the House of Commons on the 8th and 10th April, and from your own opinion at that time, I had been led to suppose that the views of my opponents were

satisfied, and that it was not likely that I should be exposed to any more hostile proceedings in Parliament. From your communication to me of yesterday, confirmed by conversations I have had with others this day, I am satisfied that your expectations have been too sanguine, and that the motion of to-morrow will be supported by several leading persons in the House whom you had considered as likely to act a different part. These circumstances have induced me maturely to examine this subject in all its bearings; and on the most impartial review I can take of it, my decided opinion is, if you are satisfied that it is really the sentiment of a numerous body of the House of Commons that, after what they have voted, it is improper that my name should remain on the list of Privy Councillors, I conceive it to be your duty to give that advice to His Majesty which tends most to strengthen this Government, and secure to it the confidence of the House of Commons. I will not disguise from you that this opinion is not altogether free from considerations of a personal nature. I trust I have fortitude sufficient to enable me to bear up against any wrong, but you are enough acquainted with the interior of my family to know how galling it must be to every domestic feeling I have to witness the unremitting distress and agitation which those debates, so full of personal asperity, must naturally produce on those most nearly connected with me.

"I am, &c.,

"MELVILLE."

This letter shows how generous was in truth Lord Melville's mind—how constantly his character inclined him to think of others rather than himself. In consequence of his counsels, Pitt gave way to the storm. When therefore, on the morrow, Whitbread rose to

bring on his motion, Pitt rose to interrupt him, declaring that he had a communication to make. Whitbread stood on his right, and insisted on finishing his speech. Then Pitt rose again. "I wished to state," he said, "that the object which the Hon. gentleman has in view is already accomplished. I have felt it my duty to advise the erasure of Lord Melville's name from the list of Privy Councillors. His Majesty has acceded to this advice, and on the first day that a Council is held, that erasure will take place. . . . . I believe, Sir, it is in the recollection of the House that a motion similar to that now brought forward was produced by the Hon. gentleman on the day to which he has alluded. At that time it did not appear to me to be the sense of the House that such a motion should be persisted in, or that it was at all necessary after the Resolutions of Censure on a former evening. Many gentlemen who concurred in these Resolutions thought that the wound which had been inflicted should not be aggravated by any unnecessary circumstances of severity; that when the justice of the public was satisfied, the feelings of the individual ought not to be outraged. Even several gentlemen on the other side of the House did not seem to wish that the motion should be pushed to a division. The motion was accordingly withdrawn. . . . Since that time, however, in consequence of the notice of the Hon. Member to renew his motion, I have felt it my duty to ascertain what is the prevailing feeling of gentlemen upon the subject; I have had occasion to ascertain the sentiments of respectable gentlemen on both sides of the House, and I have seen reason to believe that the step

to which the motion of the Hon. Member is directed was considered by them expedient. I confess, Sir, and I am not ashamed to confess it, that whatever may be my deference to the House of Commons, and however anxious I may be to accede to their wishes, I certainly felt a deep and bitter pang in being compelled to be the instrument of rendering still more severe the punishment of the Noble Lord."

It was mentioned to me by Lord Macaulay in the course of conversation that he had heard accounts of this scene from several persons who were present. From these he has vividly described it in his short biography: "As Pitt uttered the word 'pang,' his lip quivered; his voice shook; he paused; and his hearers thought that he was about to burst into tears. He suppressed his emotion, however, and proceeded with his usual majestic self-possession."

Fox, who was himself remarkable for warmth of feeling towards his friends, might well, I think, have been touched with the tokens of the same in Pitt. He might well have forborne from pressing further, at least upon that day, a point which was in truth already gained. But, rising next, he began with a cold sneer, and proceeded with a bitter invective. "Since the Right Hon. gentleman tells us that at last he has condescended to remove Lord Melville from his Privy Council, I would wish to know whether that has been done in consequence of the Resolutions of the House of Commons?" Such was his first sentence, and here is his last: "I can assure the House that there is every symptom of the country being seriously agitated, and

that it will not readily place much confidence in those who have exerted themselves so much to screen a delinquent, though they have at last been obliged to give him up."

The taunts of Mr. Fox that night were no doubt very galling to Lord Melville's friends. They drew up Lord Melville's nephew, the Secretary at War, who, with great imprudence, ventured upon some taunts in return. He observed that the late Lord Holland, as Paymaster of the Forces, had not scrupled to make large sums by the use of the balances remaining in his hands. He observed that Mr. Fox had, through his father, participated in these profits, and had spent them for the most part in his youthful gambling. Such *Tu quoque* arguments, as they are called at Eton, appear by no means worthy of Lord Melville's character and name. Fox, with unruffled temper and most admirable readiness, turned them back full upon Lord Melville's friends. There was an Act of Parliament passed in 1785, prohibiting any further profits from the use of the balances in the hands of the Treasurer of the Navy, and there was a Warrant from the King, augmenting, for that very reason of the abolition of perquisites, the Treasurer's salary. "If then," said Fox, "as the Right Hon. gentleman alleges, it was criminal in a public officer to make use of the public money for his own private profit where there was no Act of Parliament against it, *a fortiori* it must have been still more criminal after the Act had passed. . . . . I have, to be sure, gambled a good deal. My father, no doubt, left me a large fortune. But how the Right Hon. gentle-

man can infer that my manner of spending that fortune affords any proof of my connivance in what he considers my father's improper method of obtaining it, I must leave it to the House to conjecture."

The object of removing Lord Melville from the Privy Council being thus attained, his opponents could take no further step until the Select Committee had reported. There ensued as of necessity some pause in these proceedings. But meanwhile another question, of still higher import, was debated.

The Roman Catholics of Ireland had felt and seen in 1801 that the obstacle in the way of their claims was for the time insuperable. During some years, therefore, they were for the most part inclined to wait. But by degrees their impatience grew, and it was further stimulated by some of the Opposition chiefs in England. So early as November, 1803, we find Fox and Fitzwilliam eagerly press to bring on this great cause in the Session then before them. "But Sheridan," so writes Fox, "is furious against stirring a question which will embarrass himself." [5]

It was not till the administration of Pitt and the Session of 1805 that the effort was in earnest made. The Roman Catholic chiefs had held several meetings at Dublin, under the presidency of Lord Fingal. They had agreed to send over a Deputation of five to London, and to present a petition to both Houses.

On the 12th of March the Deputation thus despatched had an interview with Mr. Pitt, and asked

[5] Correspondence, edited by Lord John Russell, vol. iii. p. 434.

him to present their petition. He answered them as they expected,—that far from his urging their request under present circumstances, he should feel it his duty to resist it. Next they applied to Mr. Fox, who accordingly presented their petition to the House of Commons on the 25th, as on the same day Lord Grenville did also to the House of Peers.

On the 10th of May, in due course, according to the notice given, Lord Grenville in the Peers, as on the 13th Mr. Fox in the Commons, moved to consider the petition so presented. In the Peers there was a long and weighty debate of two nights, the last extending till near six in the morning. Lord Hawkesbury and Lord Sidmouth especially spoke of the question as one that at no time and under no circumstances ought to be conceded. The division gave, including proxies, only 49 Peers in favour of the motion, and 178 against it.

In the Commons likewise the debate was continued for two nights. Mr. Fox, who began it, spoke three hours and a half. He was answered by Dr. Duigenan, a gentleman of laborious learning, who spoke two hours. Then rose a new Member, whom the House was impatient to hear. This was no other than Henry Grattan, who had, at the request of his friends, surmounted his strong repugnance to sit in the Imperial Parliament; and who, not readily finding a seat from Ireland, had been, through the influence of Lord Fitzwilliam, placed in the seat of Burke as one of the Members for Malton.

Mr. Grattan's speech was of above an hour and a half. It was listened to throughout with the utmost attention.

The Speaker notes of it that the language was quaint and epigrammatic, with occasional flashes of striking metaphor. On the other hand, the manner, he says, was extremely conceited and affected, and the action too violent; Grattan "throwing his body, head, and arms into all sorts of absurd attitudes."[6] The same strange action, it may be observed, attended him in all his harangues. Mr. Curran, in his later years, used to take him off in a manner irresistibly ludicrous; bowing his head till it well-nigh touched the ground, and "thanking God that he had no peculiarities of gesture or appearance."

It is pleasing to find true genius rise superior to such petty impediments. Lord Byron, who at this period used often to come from Harrow and attend the debates, says, that as he was informed (for on that night he was not present), "it was for some minutes doubtful in the House of Commons whether to laugh at Grattan or to cheer. The *début* of his predecessor Flood had been a complete failure under nearly similar circumstances. But when the Ministerial part of our Senators had watched Pitt, their thermometer, for their cue, and saw him nod repeatedly his stately nod of approbation, they took the hint from their huntsman, and broke out into the most rapturous cheers."[7]

It is said that the passage which first drew forth the approving nod or "Hear! hear!" of Pitt, is where

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[6] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. ii. p. 3.

[7] Life of Byron, by Thomas Moore, vol. ii. p. 211, ed. 1832. See also vol. iii. p. 234.

Grattan dealt with the historical lore and acrimonious recapitulations of Dr. Duigenan. "I rise," he said, "to rescue the Catholics from his attack, and the Protestants from his defence." [8]

Pitt reserved his own speech for the second night. In the course of it he adverted to Grattan's as fraught "with such a splendour of eloquence." For himself he took precisely that course on which, four years back, he had determined.

"Sir," he said, "I felt that in no possible case, previous to the Union, could the privileges now demanded be given, consistently with a due regard to the Protestant interest in Ireland, to the internal tranquillity of that kingdom, the frame and structure of our constitution, or the probability of the permanent connexion of Ireland with this country. It is true, Sir, that after the Union I saw the subject in a different light; and whilst that event was in contemplation I did state, as the Hon. Gentleman says, that the measure would make a material difference in my opinion; but he has also stated what is very true, that I did not make a distinct pledge. On the contrary, I believe the line of argument I took was, that if it should be thought right to give what the Catholics required, it might be given after the Union with more safety to the Empire; or if it were thought proper to refuse giving it, that it might then be refused without producing those disastrous consequences which might have been apprehended before the Union. I come then, Sir, to the present discussion perfectly free

[8] Life of Grattan, by his Son, vol. v. p. 262.

and unfettered. I certainly was of opinion that under a united Parliament those privileges might be granted under proper guards and conditions, so as not to produce any danger to the Established Church or the Protestant Constitution—and I remain this day of that opinion; and I still think, if from other circumstances there was no objection to complying with the demands of the Catholics, and if by a wish they could be carried into effect, I own, Sir, I see none of those dangers which have been urged by some gentlemen, nor do I think that the introduction of a certain proportion of Catholics into the Imperial Parliament would be likely to be productive of any influence or effect detrimental or injurious to the welfare of the State, or the safety and security of the Constitution. But, Sir, in delivering this frank opinion, I do not mean wilfully to shut my eyes to this conviction, that a Catholic, however honourable his intentions may be, must feel anxious to advance the interests of his religion—it is in the very nature of man; he may disclaim and renounce this wish for a time, but there is no man who is at all acquainted with the operations of the human heart who does not know that the Catholic must feel that anxiety whenever the power and the opportunity may be favourable to him. But if these guards and conditions to which I have alluded had been applied, and which, could my wishes have been accomplished, it would have been my endeavour to have applied, I firmly believe no danger would have existed, and no injury could have been apprehended.

. . . . . .

"This, Sir, was the view in which I considered this

most important subject—these were the objects which I wished to attain; but circumstances, unfortunate circumstances in my opinion, rendered it at that period impossible to bring forward the measure in the way in which I then hoped it might be practicable to bring it forward—in the only way in which I think it ought at any time to be brought forward; in the only way in which it could be brought forward with advantage to the claims of those whose petition is now under consideration, or with any hope of reconciling all differences, of burying all animosities, and of producing that perfect union, in the advantages of which, gentlemen on all sides so entirely concur. What the circumstances were to which I allude as having at that time prevented me from calling the attention of Parliament to this subject, in the manner and with the prospects which I wished, it is not now necessary for me to state. All the explanation which I thought it my duty to give, I gave at that time—more I do not feel myself now called upon to give; and nothing shall induce me to enter into further details upon this subject. I shall therefore now content myself with stating that the circumstances which made me feel that it was then improper to bring forward this question, and which led to the resignation of the then administration, have made so deep, so lasting an impression upon my mind, that so long as those circumstances continue to operate, I shall feel it a duty imposed upon me, not only not to bring forward, but not in any manner to be a party in bringing forward or in agitating this question.

. . . . . .

"I must say that at the present moment I see little chance,—I may rather say, I see no chance of its being carried at all. If then, Sir, the question is not now to be carried, I think that to agitate it under such circumstances will only tend to revive those dissensions which we wish to extinguish, and to awaken all that warmth and acrimony of discussion which has heretofore prevailed."

Dividing at past four in the morning, the numbers were,—

For Mr. Fox's motion . . .	124
Against it	336
Majority .	212

Through the whole course of this winter and spring, while thus busily engaged in Parliamentary debates, Pitt was no less intent on diplomatic negotiations. It was his object that England should cease to stand alone, as she had during the last few years; that she should, on the contrary, ally herself with other great Powers against the overweening dominion of France. The differences which in the course of the past year had sprung up between the Courts of Paris and of Petersburg were highly auspicious to his views. The Emperor Alexander began to appreciate and to seek the concert of England. M. de Novosiltzoff, one of the statesmen foremost in His Majesty's confidence, was sent to London, and had several interviews with Mr. Pitt.

As may well be supposed, M. Novosiltzoff did not fail to transmit to his Court full reports of all that Mr. Pitt said. A copy of these reports has since found

its way to France, and has been seen by M. Thiers. We learn from it that the English Minister condemned in strong terms any idea of imposing a new Government on France. We must wait (he said) and let that country decide for itself. We must above all be careful in any proclamations we may issue, to pledge ourselves in the strongest terms to protect the officers of the army in the continuance of their rank, and the *acquéreurs de biens nationaux* in the preservation of their property. So important, indeed, did this last point seem to Mr. Pitt, that he declared himself ready to make from the English revenue *a provision* (such was his very word) to indemnify the Emigrants who had remained around the Bourbon Princes, and thus to deprive them of all inducement to disturb the new proprietors of the *biens nationaux*. "And thus," adds M. Thiers, "the famous measure of Indemnity to the Emigrants was revolved in the mind of Mr. Pitt twenty years before the time when it was voted in the French Chambers." [9]

The schemes which M. Novosiltzoff brought with him to London appear to have been of the crudest kind. He desired to propose what he called "an alliance of mediation," of which Russia was to be the chief. But his views were greatly modified by his intercourse with

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[9] Hist. du Consulat et de l'Empire, vol. v. p. 342. I regret that these Russian reports have not been published *in extenso*. A Memorandum, dated Jan. 19, 1805, and presented by Mr. Pitt to the Russian ambassador in London, has found a place in Schoell's Collection, and is appended by Sir A. Alison to the 39th Chapter of his History of Europe.

Mr. Pitt, and on his return to Petersburg he induced his colleagues and his Sovereign to modify theirs also. On the basis of Pitt's opinions and suggestions a treaty between Russia and England was now concluded. It was signed at Petersburg on the 11th of April by Lord Granville Leveson on the part of England, by Prince Adam Czartorisky and M. Novosiltzoff on the part of Russia.

In this document the two contracting Powers first lamented the state of suffering in which Europe was placed by the ambition of the Government of France, and declared themselves anxious to put a stop thereto without waiting for further encroachments. They would endeavour to form a general league of the Powers of Europe, and to collect upon the Continent a force of five hundred thousand effective men. The objects of this league were to be: The evacuation of the Hanoverian territory and of all Northern Germany; the independence of Holland and of Switzerland; the re-establishment of the King of Sardinia in Piedmont, with an increase of territory; the future security of the kingdom of Naples, and the complete evacuation of Italy, the isle of Elba included, by the French forces; and lastly, the establishment of an order of things in Europe which might present a solid barrier against future usurpations. For these objects England agreed to contribute, not only troops and ships, but subsidies also. And if the league were formed, no member of it was to conclude a peace with France but by consent of the rest.

This treaty, it may be noticed, was much more prospective than positive, depending as it did on other

alliances that were yet to form. It did not prevent the Russian Government from still seeking an amicable accommodation with the French, and for that object sending M. de Novosiltzoff forward to Berlin. Nor did it withhold the Court of Petersburg from still expressing its jealousy of England upon several points. There was, above all, the point of Malta, upon which Pitt felt it desirable to vindicate, not merely through Lord Mulgrave, but from himself, the course which England had pursued and was pursuing.

Mr. Pitt to M. Novosiltzoff.

(Extract.)

"Downing Street, June 7, 1805.

"I certainly have always felt that, as long as the execution of the Treaty of Amiens was in question, this country had no right to look to any object [touching Malta] but that of endeavouring to secure for it, if possible, a real and secure independence according to the spirit of that treaty. But a fresh war, produced by the conduct of France, having once cancelled that treaty, I cannot consider this country as bound by any intentions it has professed with a view to the execution of the treaty; and on general grounds of moderation and justice, I cannot think this country called upon to offer such an addition to all the other sacrifices of acquisitions made during the war, especially in return for concessions on the part of France which can afford no adequate security for Europe.

"The possession of Malta appears to be of the most essential importance to great and valuable interests of our own, and to our means of connexion and co-operation with other Powers. Some naval station in the

Mediterranean is absolutely indispensable; but none can be found so desirable and secure as Malta. Notwithstanding this sentiment, however, if the arrangement proposed respecting Malta could secure by negotiation an arrangement really satisfactory on the Continent, and particularly adequate barriers both for Italy and for Holland, and if we could obtain the only substitute for Malta which we think could at all answer the purpose (namely, Minorca), we are ready to overcome our difficulties on this point; but on any other ground the sacrifice is one to which we cannot feel ourselves justified to consent. It has, therefore, been impossible to ratify that part of the 10th article which relates to this subject, and which was referred hither for decision. We have also found ourselves under the painful necessity of protesting against any step which can lead to making our established principles of maritime law the subject of any revision or discussion. We have endeavoured to explain frankly and without reserve the motives which guide us on both points. They are, to our own minds, convincing and conclusive."

The Treaty of the 11th of April was by no means as yet divulged. It was not to be carried into effect unless the accession of Austria, and, if possible, of Prussia, were first obtained. Under these circumstances, Pitt felt that he could not make any positive communication to the House of Commons. But in his Budget he had already, as we have seen, left himself a margin of five millions for the sake of foreign subsidies; and he desired that the Session should not close without a vote for the immediate application, if required, of a large part of this large sum. With this view a Royal Message was sent down to both Houses on the 19th of

June; and on that Message the Minister founded his proposal that a sum of three millions and a half should be placed at His Majesty's disposal for such objects.

The Royal Message was encountered by Grey with a proposed Address, that His Majesty would be pleased not to prorogue his Parliament until he should be enabled to afford it more full information with respect to foreign affairs. Fox spoke on the same side with his usual ready skill. "Since," he said, "the answer cannot be made at the present period of the Session, let the Session be made to continue till the answer comes. Since the answer cannot be made to accommodate the Session, let the Session be made to accommodate the answer. . . . . When a Minister says that it is his duty to give no information, I must reply that it is my duty to give no money." Nevertheless the motion of Grey was negatived by 261 votes against 110, and the proposal of Pitt was, without a division, adopted.

The Committee on the Tenth Report had been most desirous to examine Lord Melville, and Lord Melville himself was most desirous to be examined. But the Peers took fire on a point of privilege. They consulted precedents, and came to a Vote that Lord Melville should only answer to the Committee upon points respecting which the House of Commons had not passed any criminatory Resolutions against him.[1] Under this limitation his testimony could not in fact be tendered or received. The Committee had to frame their Report

[1] See the precedents from 1553 to 1804, adduced in the Lords' Journals of May 11, 1805.

without hearing his defence. And the tenor of their Report was by no means favourable. They dwelt especially on two sums, amounting together to upwards of 20,000*l.*, which it was acknowledged that Lord Melville had received as Treasurer of the Navy, and had applied to other than naval purposes.

Under such circumstances, and a new motion by Whitbread impending, Lord Melville addressed a letter to the Speaker, asking permission to appear before the House and to speak in his own vindication. The permission was granted, and he was admitted on the 11th of June. A chair for his reception had been placed within the Bar. He sat down and covered himself. In a few minutes he took off his hat, rose, and proceeded to address the House. It was a sight that must have affected even those who had voted against him. To see him who had been for so many years next to Mr. Pitt the most powerful man in that assembly, now a culprit at its Bar—to hear the voice which had swayed the House on great public questions, now exerted to repel personal and degrading charges—was surely no light, no common reverse in the wheel of Fortune. As was said by Lord Melville himself in the course of his address: "This is not such a conclusion as I had hoped for, and as I think I had a right to expect, to a long and laborious life devoted to my country's service."

Lord Melville spoke for two hours and twenty minutes. He then bowed and withdrew. In his statement he entered very fully into the charges made against him. He affirmed in the most solemn manner as he had already that the sum in question of 20,000*l.* was

neither used nor meant to be used for any purpose of his own emolument. It was expended solely on public objects, by himself as a confidential servant of the Crown; but how, he could not disclose "without a great breach as well of public duty as of private honour." "I trust," said Lord Melville in conclusion, "that nothing in the course of this day has fallen from me in any degree disrespectful to the assembly which with their indulgence I have been permitted to address; but I equally trust I cannot be liable to censure if I have not in any part of what I have said shown a disposition to deprecate, by humiliating submission, any of the future evils which may be in contemplation against me."

The reader of that speech at this distance of time may perhaps concur with me in thinking that it is marked by a becoming dignity and consciousness of innocence. But the impression on his hearers was far from favourable. It was thought too haughty and defiant. It was thought to give spirit to his enemies. It was thought to injure rather than improve his cause. So Speaker Abbot notes. Out of doors the violence had already risen higher still, and the old cry against "Placemen and Scotsmen" had been in full force revived."[2]

When Lord Melville had withdrawn, Mr. Whitbread rose, and in a speech of two hours and a half moved his Impeachment. Mr. Bond on the other hand proposed his prosecution by the Attorney-General. That debate was adjourned. In the next, at half-past four in the

[2] See on this point a remarkable letter from Francis Horner to Sir James Mackintosh (Memoirs, vol. i. p. 316).

morning the House divided. For the impeachment there were 195, against it 272. But the prosecution was after a keen contest carried by the narrow majority of nine, the numbers being 238 and 229.

It had been hoped by Lord Melville's friends that both these motions might be equally rejected. But if one was to be carried, they preferred the form of Impeachment to the form of prosecution. On the 25th, Mr. Leycester, who had been Chairman of the Select Committee, moved to rescind the former vote, and to proceed against Lord Melville by Impeachment. The Government supported his motion, and it was carried by 166 against 143.

That vote was decisive of the form. Next day, the 26th, Whitbread carried up the Impeachment to the Bar of the House, and named a Committee to draw up the articles. But the Session being now so near its close, the further progress was deferred until the ensuing year.

In the midst of these debates upon Lord Melville, in which Pitt bore a principal share, there was another motion of Whitbread levelled at himself for his advance of 40,000*l.* in 1796 to Messrs. Boyd and Benfield. Pitt, however, clearly showed the necessity of that advance to the public service. The Hon. Henry Lascelles, at that time one of the two members for Yorkshire and subsequently the second Earl of Harewood, moved an amendment, affirming that this advance, "though not strictly conformable to law, was highly expedient in the existing circumstances, and attended with the most beneficial effects." This amendment seemed to meet

exactly both the facts of the case and the feelings of the House. It was carried without a division, and a Bill of Indemnity to Mr. Pitt, which was founded upon it, subsequently passed *nem. con.*

In his resistance to the attacks which were made upon Lord Melville, Pitt appears to have had the full sympathy of their former colleague at Dropmore. We find Lord Grenville write to his brother Buckingham in the following terms: "You are not ignorant how much I dislike the greatest part of what is now going on, and certainly no part of it more than the attempt to decry all the Boards of Admiralty with which I have been acting all through my life, for the purpose of raising up a false reputation to Lord St. Vincent, who may be, and I believe is, a very good admiral; but whom I have never yet seen any reason to approve of, either as a politician or as a Minister. . . . It is high time for us to pull up if we do not mean to be hurried away into courses precisely the reverse of the whole tenor of our lives. For God's sake consider this more than you seem to have done yet."[3]

Very different was the feeling of Lord Sidmouth's friends. They had voted with Mr. Pitt in the neck and neck division of the 8th of April. But in the subsequent conflicts they were all found hostile. Not content with voting, there were several among them, as Bond and Hiley Addington, who spoke with the utmost bitterness against Lord Melville.

It was natural and indeed unavoidable that a corre-

[3] Courts and Cabinets of George the Third, vol. iii. p. 418.

sponding bitterness should arise against themselves. Pitt's friends, both inside the House and out of it, were very angry. Of this we may observe a token in a caricature of Gillray's. It bears the date of July, 1805. It represents Lord Melville as "the Wounded Lion" lying helpless on his side, while some jackasses are preparing to assail him. One of them is made to say to the other, "Very highly indebted to the lion, brother Hiley;" and the answer is, "Then kick him again, brother Bragge!"

As the close of the Session drew near, Pitt felt it necessary to seek an explanation with Lord Sidmouth on this subject. "Observe," he said, "the hostility and defiance against Government which the speeches of Bond and Hiley seem to show. Their conduct must be marked. It is impossible for me to give them places *now*. If I did, my own sincerity would be suspected."

To these frank and explicit words Lord Sidmouth answered by renewing on his own and on Lord Buckinghamshire's part a tender of resignation. Pitt asked him not to decide in haste, and they agreed to meet again. They were to have met on the 2nd of July. But here we find a token—only too frequent at this juncture—of Pitt's enfeebled health. "I am confined to the house to-day," so he writes to Lord Sidmouth, "by a violent cold and rheumatism, which will also oblige me to keep myself under Sir Walter's orders to-morrow."

The two statesmen saw each other again on the 4th. "I told Mr. Pitt," writes Lord Sidmouth, "that my friends had no wish by which I was embarrassed. The

question was between him and me. I had urged nothing, but he had deliberately and repeatedly told me that nothing could be done; that the whole should be suspended till the next Session, and that we should try in the mean time how we could go on together." Pitt was firm in his own view, but so was Lord Sidmouth in his. So the latter, with the Lord of Bucks, finally resigned.

In the 7th, after the resignation was completed, and at Mr. Pitt's house on Putney Heath, they had another and the parting interview. Lord Sidmouth in his later years was fond of relating to his friends the details of what had passed. He had asked whether there had been anything in his conduct at any time inconsistent with what was due from him to Mr. Pitt, to which Mr. Pitt holding out his hand replied, with tears in his eyes, "Never. I have nothing to acknowledge from you but the most generous and honourable conduct, and I grieve that we are to part."[4]

From the perfect probity of Lord Sidmouth in every circumstance of life, we may be sure that this conversation passed exactly as he told it. On the other hand we may reasonably question the sufficiency of his motive for resigning. His principal friends had assured him that after their late votes they did not for the present desire—they would not even willingly accept—office. Lord Sidmouth was quite prepared in legal phrase to let judgment go against them by default. As his biographer explains it: "Had Mr. Pitt only

[4] Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 373.

silently deferred the fulfilment of his engagement for a time, allowance would have been due for the state of his feelings; but by raising the point himself when there was no idea of pressing it upon him, he created a grievance which, but for his own act, would not have existed."[5]

A grievance, but how very slight a one! A variation, but surely of an infinitesimal kind! And surely also, of the two courses which Mr. Pitt might have here adopted, the one which he did adopt seems the more frank, the more manly, and the more becoming.

To fill up the two vacant offices, Pitt transferred Lord Camden from the War Department to the Presidency of the Council, and gave the War Department to Lord Castlereagh, the latter still retaining the Board of Control. Lord Harrowby having rallied from his illness re-entered the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Several of Pitt's arrangements, besides Lord Barham's, were well understood at this juncture to be only of a temporary kind. Several high offices would be at his disposal with the perfect good-will and cheerful consent of the actual holders in the event of a wider combination being made. So Pitt himself stated it to Rose at Cuffnells in the September following.

The Session was closed on the 12th of July, but not by the King in person. His Majesty was now suffering under a grievous calamity, the most grievous in this world perhaps, or second only to the mental aberrations

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[5] Life, by Dean Pellew, vol. ii. p. 377.

which he had also undergone. He was beginning to lose his sight. One eye was almost entirely darkened, and the other grew less and less clear. There was a hope, but as it proved not well founded, that the advance of the cataract would leave scope hereafter for a successful operation. Meanwhile the King bore his distress with the greatest fortitude and resignation.

CHAPTER XLII.

1805.

Napoleon crowned King of Italy — Annexation of Genoa to France — Grant of Lucca to the Princess Elisa — Third Coalition — Villeneuve pursued by Nelson — Action between Villeneuve and Calder — Villeneuve proceeds to Cadiz — Resentment of Napoleon — War waged by him against the Austrians — Nelson at Merton — Appointed to command the Fleet destined for Cadiz — Takes leave of Pitt — Arrival of Sir Arthur Wellesley from India — Pitt's fruitless representations to the King — His last interview with Lord Sidmouth — Projected expedition to the north of Germany — Surrender of Mack at Ulm — Its effect upon Pitt — Battle of Trafalgar, and death of Nelson — Pitt's last speech in public — The Duke of Wellington's description of him at this period — Notes of Lords Fitzharris and Eldon.

WE must now revert to the proceedings of our indefatigable and Imperial adversary. He had gone to be crowned as King in the Cathedral of Milan; and the ceremony took place in solemn state on the 26th of May. "Cisalpine" and "Cispadane" were names no longer used; the title which he assumed was that of "King of Italy." The very title gave great offence and alarm to Austria, since it seemed to involve a claim to her recently acquired Venetian provinces. But greater still was the offence, greater still the alarm, which two other acts of Napoleon at nearly the same time produced. The one was the annexation of the Republic of Genoa to France. The other was the grant of Lucca as a fief, or dependent principality, to one of his sisters, the Princess Elisa Baciocchi. Both these acts were thought

to prove the aspiring character of his ambition, and the continued progress of the aggrandizements which he desired for his empire.

So great indeed was the significance ascribed to these acts, that they appear to have decided the result of the negotiations. The Emperor Alexander sent orders to M. Novosiltzoff, already at Berlin, not to proceed to Paris, but on the contrary to return to Petersburg. The Emperor Francis signified his accession to the treaty of the 11th of April. This he did on the 9th of August, through Count Stadion, his Minister at Petersburg, claiming, however, at the same time, a subsidy of 3,000,000*l.* from England. In the same month of August Sweden acceded also, and concluded another Convention of Subsidy with the English Government. And thus was formed, under the guidance of Mr. Pitt, the third Coalition against France in its Revolutionary period.

It would not be difficult, from the despatches which remain, to relate step by step, and through all their phases, the negotiations with the several Courts which Mr. Pitt superintended. But it may suffice to give their general scope in the opinion of Lord Malmesbury—qualified beyond all Englishmen at that period to form an opinion on such a subject. That opinion, be it observed, was not expressed with any view of pleasing or paying court to Mr. Pitt, since it was merely put down in the private note-book of the veteran diplomatist: "During the whole of the year Pitt was negotiating his great alliance with Russia and Austria. . . . . Never was any measure, so far as human foresight can go, better

combined or better negotiated. . . . . Pitt, whom I saw in Downing Street on the 26th of September, gave me a most minute and clear account of this whole measure, and was very justly sanguine as to its result."[1]

Critics, however, are not wanting. Some partisans of Addington's Ministry consider its system of isolation as preferable, under all the circumstances, to the system of alliances in Pitt's. It is argued that Austria was exhausted by her recent conflicts, and would have waged war with much more vigour if recruited by a longer rest. But in this argument it seems to be forgotten that this period of rest would have profited to France in at least the same proportion. If a confederacy against the immense power of France was wise at all—and there are but few who dispute it—there seems no reason to believe that its chances of success would have been increased by postponing it from 1805 to 1808 or 1810.

But in truth the case is stronger still. The policy of Napoleon at that time was one of rapid aggression. Thus in one year he had annexed Piedmont, and in another Genoa. Thus on one side he over-rode Switzerland, and on another side he dictated to Spain. If then this policy were to continue unchecked, it would follow that the chances would become less and less in favour of the Allies the longer the conflict was delayed.

These arguments, it will be observed, stand on wide and European, and by no means merely English grounds. They are wholly independent of the wish which we

[1] Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 339.

might be supposed to feel to turn aside from us as soon as possible the threatened torrent of invasion.

His objects beyond the Alps having been accomplished, Napoleon, with his customary spirit, darted back from Italy. Leaving Turin on the evening of the 8th, he reached Fontainebleau on the morning of the 11th of July. On the 3rd of August he was once more in his camp at Boulogne, intent as ever on invading the opposite shores. The very day after his arrival he wrote to Decrès, his Minister of the Marine, in nearly the same phrase as he had used the year before: "The English do not know what is hanging over their ears. If we can but be masters of the passage for twelve hours, *l'Angleterre a vécu*—England will have ceased to be."[2]

To obtain the command of the Channel for a few days or hours, Napoleon had in some degree modified his plan of the preceding year. He still desired that Villeneuve at Toulon, and Missiessy at Rochefort, should put to sea at the first favourable opportunity. But his present idea was that they should sail straight to the West Indies. There he hoped that they might attract a large proportion of the English fleet, and from thence they might suddenly return, forming one armada, and riding superior in the sea opposite Boulogne. Spain being still under the absolute sway of France, and now at open war with England, the co-operation of her squadrons at Cadiz and Ferrol might henceforth be obtained. But the supreme command was vested in

[2] Letter of the 16 *Thermidor, an xiii.* (August 4, 1805), preserved in the French archives, and cited by M. Thiers.

Villeneuve, an officer of courage, fidelity, and skill, but a little shrinking from such vast responsibilities, and of that ill-omened mood of mind which does not merely forebode calamities, but produces them.

In pursuance of his instructions, Villeneuve seized his opportunity and sailed from Toulon on the 30th of March, with eleven ships of the line. Off Cadiz he drew to himself the Spanish Admiral Gravina, with part of the Spanish squadron, and he cast anchor at Martinique on the 14th of May. Missiessy, by favour of a storm in leaving Rochefort, had already arrived in the West Indies, but Ganteaume had been unable to break the blockade of Brest. Still, however, Villeneuve had now united, and under his orders, twenty line of battle ships; a number which seemed adequate to the object which he had in view.

Nelson was at this time commanding in the Mediterranean. He had been a warm friend to the Addington administration, but was no enemy to that which succeeded. "I am free and independent," so he writes in one of his most familiar letters;[3] "I like both Pitt and Lord Melville, and why should I oppose them?"

Under all changes of Ministers Nelson continued to serve his country with the same ardent spirit and unconquerable zeal. Finding that the fleet of Villeneuve had passed the Straits of Gibraltar, he followed at once with his own ten ships. The magic of his name sufficed to protect our West India islands. Villeneuve, who was planning an attack upon Barbadoes, relinquished it as

[3] To Lady Hamilton, August 22, 1804.

soon as he learnt that Nelson was at hand. With such a chief as the hero of the Nile, even twelve ships (for Nelson had been joined by Admiral Cochrane and two ships more) might become a match for twenty. Villeneuve fell in with and took a homeward bound convoy of considerable value, but he indulged no further dreams of West India conquest, and on the 9th of June he was already in full sail back again to Europe.

It is, however, only just to state in reference to the superior numbers of the French and Spanish ships that the latter partook of the general decadence of their country at this time. Under the miserable government of the Prince of the Peace the fleets were left to rot in the harbours, and on a sudden call they had been hastily, and by no means efficiently equipped.

Nelson on his part, with his twelve ships, was most eager to get at Villeneuve. He hoped, as he said, to see the glories of Rodney renewed in the same seas. But he was misled by false intelligence, which caused him to seek the enemy at Tobago instead of Martinique. Finding that they had departed, and were, as he believed, steering back to Europe, he set sail for Europe also on the 13th of June, with his own ten and only one of Cochrane's ships. On the 19th of July he anchored at Gibraltar; and next day, says he, "I went on shore for the first time since June 16, 1803."

Nelson, however, did not pause at Gibraltar. Consulting with his old friend Admiral Collingwood, they thought it probable that the invasion of Ireland might be the ultimate object of the French and Spanish armament. Nelson therefore set off again at full sail to pro-

tect the Irish coasts. Finding that the ships of Villeneuve had not been seen or heard of in that quarter, he, without an hour's loss of time, steered back into the Channel, where he hoped to find them; and on the 15th of August he joined the fleet of Admiral Cornwallis at Ushant. In this pursuit of Villeneuve to and from the West Indies, Nelson showed skill and exertions such as have seldom been equalled, and never been surpassed. So says Mr. Southey, and his praise would have seemed excessive to the French writers of his age; but more recently their honourable candour has expressed the same opinion in terms of even higher commendation to their gallant enemy.

The true object of Villeneuve was in the first place to liberate the squadron at Ferrol. Some way off Cape Finisterre he met the fleet of Sir Robert Calder; and on the 22nd of July there ensued a partial action between them. Calder had but fifteen line-of-battle ships to oppose the twenty of Villeneuve; nevertheless, ere night came on, two of the Spanish vessels had struck their flag to that of England. Next morning, and for some time longer, the two fleets remained at gaze; at last they bore away in different directions, as though by common consent. For this both Admirals were severely blamed. The French officers complained that Villeneuve did not renew the conflict where his superior force gave well-grounded hope of victory. The English officers complained that Calder did not further pursue the advantage which he had already won. Subsequently Sir Robert was tried by a Court-Martial, and was found Guilty, but only of an error in judgment.

After the engagement with Sir Robert, Villeneuve touched first at Vigo. Thence, after some days, which he spent in refitting, he proceeded to Coruña and Ferrol. The Spanish line-of-battle ships ready to join him at the latter, brought up his entire number to twenty-nine. He found on shore renewed orders from Napoleon to sail straight to Brest, to break its blockade by a battle with Cornwallis, and then proceed into the Channel conjointly with Gantcaume. The personal bravery of Villeneuve urged him to this enterprise, but his foreboding temper deterred him. He expected to find Nelson already in combination either with Cornwallis or with Calder, and he knew that such a combination might suffice to overwhelm him. In this, as it chanced, he judged too little favourably of his own fortune. The dates which I have given will show that there was still an interval of which he might have profited before Nelson had returned.

Villeneuve passed some days in great uncertainty and anguish of mind. When he had formed his resolution he did no more than hint it in his private letters to the Minister Decrès. He concealed it even from General Lauriston, who commanded the troops on board. It was not till he put again to sea that he announced the course which he meant to take. He had come to the conclusion that his force was wholly inadequate to the enterprise upon Brest. He deemed it his duty to steer in the very opposite direction, and proceed to Cadiz; where he might expect the further junction of several ships of the line.

During this time Napoleon at Boulogne was in a state

of great suspense and most eager expectation. For hours and hours together he was seen to stand on the sea-shore straining his eyes along the vast expanse, and watching for a sail to rise on the blue horizon. Some of his officers stationed, telescope in hand, at divers points upon the cliffs, had orders to bring him the most early intimation of all they could discern. His troops at the several small ports, besides Boulogne, were all prepared and ready to embark at a moment's notice. No time was to be lost when once the fleets of Villeneuve and Ganteaume should appear. The anxiety of the Emperor at this period was the greater since the designs of Austria and of Russia were no longer any secret to him. Austria indeed had all but openly declared herself, and her army was already in movement to cross her frontier stream, the Inn. Still Napoleon trusted that there would be time for him to strike a quick and deadly blow on England before he was called upon to wage a Continental war in Germany; but under such circumstances, every day, every hour, became of paramount and pressing importance.

Under such circumstances, then, did the tidings reach Napoleon that his fleet had left Ferrol, but was steering to Cadiz instead of Brest. The fiery burst of his not unmerited resentment may be more readily imagined than described. He found not only his orders disobeyed, but his policy baffled. He found himself compelled to relinquish the scheme of a descent on England which he had so long cherished and so ably prepared. M. Daru, the historian of Venice, who was then Chief Clerk in the War Department, saw Napoleon on the very

morning that the news arrived; and he vividly depicts the scene which followed, in a fragment, as yet unpublished, of his Memoirs. He found, as he states, the Emperor in great agitation, uttering words to himself, and seeming scarce to see the persons that came in. All this while Daru stood by in silence, and awaiting instructions. Of a sudden Napoleon walked up to him and began abruptly: "Do you know," he cried, "do you know where Villeneuve is now? He is at Cadiz—at Cadiz!" Then he descanted, at some length and with much ardour, on the weakness and the incapacity which had led to this result, and which must ruin his project of invasion—the best conceived project, he said, and the surest, that he ever in his life had framed.[4]

But the mighty genius of Napoleon soon rose superior to such gusts of unavailing resentment or regret. He calmed himself at once by a resolute exertion of his will. On that very morning M. Daru wrote down, under his dictation and during several hours, a series of detailed instructions to carry out an entirely new plan which Napoleon formed. Though the sea was closed against him, the Continent was open. Though he could no longer deal his threatened blow on England, he might strike at the Austrian armies before the Russians were prepared to take the field. With this view all the orders were given. The several divisions of French troops were drawn as silently as possible from the Channel

[4] This unpublished fragment was communicated by M. Daru's son to M. Thiers, and has been cited by the latter (Hist. du Cons. et de l'Empire, vol. v. p. 464).

coast, and moved by rapid marches to divers points upon the Rhine. Artillery and stores were sent forward to Strasburg and Mayence.

The Austrians, with General Mack as their chief commander, had fully expected to surprise their formidable adversary while still entangled with his English expedition. On the 8th of September they passed the Inn and advanced into Bavaria. But the lion had already burst from his trammels. On the 2nd of the month the Emperor had set out from Boulogne. He remained some time at Paris, partly to provide for the government in his absence, and partly to allow time for the march of his army; but on the 24th he left the Tuileries, and on the 26th he was at Strasburg. He found the columns of his troops arrived upon the Rhine, and eager to pass it under his command. Turning their thoughts, as he had his, from England, they looked forward to new conquests with his eagles borne aloft in Germany—or, as the Germans in that its last year still preferred to call it, the "Holy Roman Empire." Such, then, was the origin and such the outset of the wonderful campaign of 1805.

Lord Nelson did not long remain with Admiral Cornwallis. The crews of his own flag-ship the Victory and of the Superb were exhausted in strength, though not in spirit, by their long-continued buffeting at sea; and, according to the orders of the Admiralty, Nelson brought both vessels to Spithead. He then went on shore, and proceeded to his house at Merton in Surrey. Even there, and while relieved for a time from his public duty, he was most earnestly intent on the public service.

This the following letter, written as it was at daybreak, will evince:—

Lord Nelson to Mr. Pitt.

"Gordon's Hotel, 6 A.M.,
Aug. 29, 1805.

"SIR,

"I cannot rest until the importance of Sardinia, in every point of view, is taken into consideration. If my letters to the different Secretaries of State cannot be found, I can bring them with me. My belief is, that if France possesses Sardinia, which she may do any moment she pleases, our commerce must suffer most severely, if possible to be carried on. Many and most important reasons could be given why the French must not be suffered to possess Sardinia; but your time is too precious to read more words than is necessary: therefore I have only stated two strong points to call your attention to the subject. I am sure our fleet would find a difficulty, if not impossibility, in keeping any station off Toulon, for want of that island to supply cattle, water, and refreshments, in the present state of the Mediterranean; and that we can have no certainty of commerce at any time, but what France chooses to allow us, to either Italy or the Levant.

"I am, &c.,

"NELSON AND BRONTE."

Nelson at Merton was for one or two weeks at rest, or rather he only seemed to be so; for his soul was burning within him; he longed to be at that French fleet which he had either watched or chased without cessation during the last two years. He felt that those ships were or ought to be his own, as the reward of his

past toils—that no man but himself should strike the decisive blow against them. Unable any longer to resist the noble impulse, he wrote to Lord Barham, as the head of the Admiralty, offering to undertake the command of the great fleet designed to be sent out to meet, and, if possible, engage the enemy off Cadiz.

The offer so honourably made was most gladly accepted. At the interview which ensued Lord Barham desired him to choose his own officers. How many an Admiral might here have thought of his cousins or his hangers-on! But the answer of Lord Nelson was fraught in a higher strain. "Choose yourself, my Lord," he said. "The same spirit actuates the whole profession. You cannot choose wrong!"

Before he finally left London, Nelson went to take leave of Mr. Pitt, and then returned, for the last time, to his family and friends at Merton. Among his guests at that period, in September, 1805, was one of his nephews, who was still surviving, in an honoured old age, to vindicate his memory from some harsh aspersions, in November, 1861.[5]

It appears from this gentleman's statement, that Lord Nelson, on his return to Merton, being asked in what manner he had been received by Mr. Pitt, replied that he had every reason to be gratified. At Mr. Pitt's desire he had explained his whole views upon the naval

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[5] See the excellent and feeling letter in reply to Mrs. St. George's journal, which was published in *The Times* of Nov. 6, 1861, from "A Nephew of Admiral Lord Nelson." I have since, through the courtesy of the writer, been made acquainted with his name, and learnt from him some further particulars of the parting interview.

war. As regarded the French fleet at Cadiz, Mr. Pitt had asked what force would be sufficient to ensure a victory over it. Lord Nelson mentioned his opinion on that point, but added, that his object was not merely to conquer, but to annihilate; on which Mr. Pitt assured him that whatever force Lord Nelson held necessary for that object should, so far as possible, be sent out to him. And then Lord Nelson, telling the tale to his family, added these words: "Mr. Pitt paid me a compliment which, I believe, he would not have paid to a Prince of the Blood. When I rose to go, he left the room with me and attended me to the carriage."

How great a parting scene—Nelson sent forth by Pitt to Trafalgar! Surely it might deserve not only a biographer's commemoration, but also an artist's skill.

Nelson's preparations for his high command were soon completed. On the night of September the 13th he set out from his house at Merton—"dear, dear Merton," as he writes in his note-book, "where I left all which I hold dear in this world." Next day he embarked at Portsmouth in his old flag-ship, so renowned through him, the Victory. He sailed at the head of the great fleet combined for this great service, and on the 29th of the month—his birthday—he arrived off the coast of Cadiz.

Thus, then, on nearly the same day, at the close of September, two men of genius and energy, such as no age has seen surpassed for warfare by land or by sea—Napoleon and Nelson—had reached the points for action which they desired and designed, and were ready to strike a blow, each on his own element, each with a

force and against antagonists worthy of his fame. Never were higher expectations raised—never did expectations, however high, more signally fall short of the great realities.

In the course of that same September there landed from India a man destined to play a part not less memorable than Lord Nelson's in the warlike annals of his country. This was Sir Arthur Wellesley. And at nearly the same time came a letter as follows:—

Marquis Wellesley to Mr. Pitt.

"My dear Pitt, "Fort William, March 28, 1805.

. . . . . .

"My health and many other considerations make me extremely anxious to return to England. Undoubtedly it is my duty to determine my conduct in the government of this great empire by considerations of higher importance than the temper of the India House; but the operation of that body upon all the springs of this government is so powerful, that it is impossible to govern India with satisfaction while the Court of Directors shall entertain an unfavourable opinion of my services, and shall be permitted by the Board of Control to manifest that opinion in the most indecorous language. I propose by another packet to write to you more fully on this subject, with a view to justify my determination of leaving India at the earliest practicable moment, notwithstanding your most kind letter of the 31st August, 1804. I received that letter with the most cordial sense of gratitude and satisfaction. Your approbation, esteem, and friendship are the primary objects of all my hopes and cares; but in order to enable me to remain at this arduous post, I

must receive the direct, *unambiguous*, effective support of the Board of Control, and the Court of Directors must not be suffered to harass all my operations by peevish and vexatious counter-action. Being well apprised of all your difficulties, I will not increase them, and therefore I will not urge you to grant these advantages at the hazard of your own embarrassment in the conduct of affairs at home; but you are now fully apprised of the state of my situation in India, and if you should wish me to continue, you will take the necessary steps for that purpose, or your candour and justice will pardon my retreat in December or January next, at the latest, whatever may be the state of affairs here.

"I was highly gratified by the honours conferred on Lord Lake and Sir Arthur Wellesley. The public effect of that most judicious measure was extremely salutary in India. It has raised the spirits of the whole army; and I return you my most sincere thanks for your attention to my recommendation of their glorious services.

"I congratulate you upon your success in providing against the menaced invasion with such alacrity and vigour. We are in anxious expectation of learning the details of the Emperor's disasters in that rash attempt. Let me recommend Sir Arthur Wellesley to you: I think you will be pleased with his knowledge and talents. If you should want a good General, I can assure you he will prove useful to you.

"Ever, my dear Pitt, &c.,

"WELLESLEY."

Sir Arthur on his arrival in London was most warmly welcomed by Mr. Pitt, both as the brother of a constant friend, and as himself the victor of Assye and Argaum.

They had many conversations on military matters, and each made a most favourable impression on the other. What Mr. Pitt said of Sir Arthur, only a few days before his own death, will be recorded by me in its proper place. The Duke of Wellington, to the close of his life, continued to speak of Mr. Pitt in terms of high regard and veneration. He used, during several years, to attend the anniversaries of the Pitt Dinner, with the object of doing honour to his memory; and he has more than once told me that, in his opinion, Mr. Pitt was the greatest Minister that has ever ruled in England.

The Session of 1805 had been a severe strain on Mr. Pitt, by the great exertions which it rendered necessary. With only one other Cabinet Minister in the House of Commons, and amidst the constant attacks which the nearer view of office prompted from the opposite benches, he had to contend not only against all his former enemies, but also against some of his former colleagues, and this in an enfeebled state of health, and in a balanced state of public feeling. Pitt was not without some hope that the experience of the past year might make the King less adverse to his counsels for an extended basis of administration.

In this hope, Pitt determined to seek an audience of his Sovereign. He was bound to remain in London, or near it, so long as any prospect of French invasion remained. But when the French army was in full march from the Channel coast, and when Napoleon himself had left Boulogne, Pitt set out for Weymouth, where the King was passing some weeks. On the first day of his arrival he was alone with His Majesty for

three hours, and urged anew, but quite in vain, all the arguments he could, stopping short only at the point where he feared lest he might disturb the health or the mind of his Royal Master.[6]

Some details of this visit are supplied by Mr. Rose, whose Diary, after many months' cessation, at this point, though but for some days, recommences:

"*Sept.* 17.—Mr. Pitt left me at Cuffnells to go to the King at Weymouth. On the preceding evening I had a conversation of between two and three hours with him in my own room on the state of foreign and domestic politics. On the former he was extremely sanguine, from the treaties entered into with Russia and Austria, and the measures taken in consequence of them.

"*Sept.* 21.—I arrived at Weymouth late in the evening, and supped with Mr. Pitt, who stated to me all that had passed with His Majesty, which was extremely discouraging. He told me he was to have his definitive answer the next day.

"*Sunday, Sept.* 22.—I went on the Esplanade early in the morning; and at a quarter past seven the King came there, accompanied by Colonel Taylor, who, on the King calling me to him, left us. His Majesty then told me that Mr. Pitt had made very strong representations to him of the necessity of strengthening his Government by the accession of persons from the parties of Lord Grenville and Mr. Fox, but that he was

[6] See a note derived from authentic information, and ascribed to Sir George C. Lewis, in the Edinburgh Review of January, 1858, p. 167.

persuaded there existed no necessity whatever for such a junction. . . . . I told His Majesty that considering our situation in the House of Commons, I was perfectly persuaded if Mr. Pitt should be confined by the gout or any other complaint for only two or three weeks there would be an end of us. . . . I had not the good fortune, however, to make any impression whatever on His Majesty; on the contrary, I found him infinitely more impracticable on the point than last year when at Cuffnells."

Lord Grenville through one or two of his old colleagues, and Mr. Fox through Lord Grenville, received some early hints of the proposal which Mr. Pitt was about to lay before the King. Since His Majesty's consent could not be obtained, the proposal fell of course to the ground. But even had that consent been granted, the negotiation, with Fox at least, would not have proceeded very far. For, as we learn from Fox's familiar correspondence at this time, he intended to insist on the condition that Pitt should resign the headship of the Treasury, and that some friend of Fox, as Grey, or Lord Fitzwilliam, or Lord Moira, should be placed there in his stead. It is not clear, however, that every member of the Fox or the Grenville parties would have gone along with this exorbitant pretension; and a schism in politics might perhaps on that account have ensued.

In another passage of his private correspondence—to Grey, on the 28th of August—Fox mentions a different rumour which had reached him. "Of Pitt I hear that to those who casually meet him, his appearance is

just as it was in the House of Commons—that of extreme uneasiness, and almost misery." But in truth this description of Pitt must be taken as applying only to his bodily health. His spirits were at this time buoyant from the prospects of our new alliance with Russia and Austria; as we learn from several testimonies, and, above all, Mr. Rose's, during his visit at Weymouth.

Another visit of Mr. Pitt at this period was prompted by personal regard. Henry, eldest son of Lord Sidmouth, and Clerk of the Pells, was a youth of great promise. While his father was still Speaker he had been a great favourite with Mr. Pitt, and was frequently indulged in the privilege of playing chess with him. So says Lord Sidmouth's biographer. I may observe in passing that I do not recollect any other notice of Mr. Pitt's fondness for that game.

Unhappily, Henry Addington, being sent to Oxford, and ambitious of distinction, overstrained his powers of mind. In the summer of 1805 he was dangerously ill. When the danger passed, it was found that he had sunk into a state of stupor, or rather imbecility. Seldom stirring, never speaking, and giving no sign of either pain or pleasure—such was the mournful state in which he continued till his death in 1823.'''

Lord Sidmouth himself was at the time suffering from severe indisposition, and Mr. Pitt rode to Richmond Park to inquire respecting father and son. He asked to see the first, but was by some mistake denied. Lord Sidmouth wrote to explain the accident, and ask his visitor to call if he could in another ride. The result is told as follows:—

Lord Sidmouth to Mr. Hiley Addington.

"Richmond Park, Sept. 29, 1805.

"Between ourselves, a Dissolution is not intended, and it is probable that Parliament will not meet till after Christmas. All this, you will be surprised to hear, I had from Pitt, who sat here near an hour this morning. Our conversation was nearly engrossed by the state of my family; and the only public topics adverted to were the preparations on the Continent and the state of His Majesty's health, the accounts of which are as good as possible. Pitt looked tolerably well, but had been otherwise."

That was, it may be noticed, the last occasion on which these two friends from early childhood ever saw each other.

At the beginning of October we find Mr. Pitt at Walmer Castle, intent upon a scheme for destroying the French boats which remained at Boulogne.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Castlereagh.

"Walmer Castle, Oct. 6, 1805.

"DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

"You will have learned from General Moore the substance of what passed between him and me, which left me convinced that any attempt at landing is attended with too much risk to justify the experiment. I still entertain considerable hopes of something effectual being done by the rockets, and I trust you will not have had much further difficulty in overcoming the objections both of Lord Keith and the Admiralty. Your answer to Lord Barham places the subject exactly in

the true light. I return the papers on that subject, and also those from Lord Lavington. Under the very peculiar circumstances, it seems impossible to object to allowing the 20,000*l.* for which he has drawn. I hope to remain here till this day se'nnight, and shall be extremely glad if you can execute your intention of coming on Thursday. With this wind, I am much disappointed not to have heard of anything fresh from the Continent.

"Ever sincerely yours,

"W. PITT."

Lord Castlereagh did accordingly join Mr. Pitt at Walmer Castle, and the two friends returned together to London on the 14th of October.[7]

In the course of the same month Mr. Pitt paid a visit of some days to Lord Camden at Wilderness, and another to Lord Bathurst at Cirencester. But he was never for many days together absent from London. Besides the great scheme of European warfare, which required his unceasing vigilance, he had at this time to consider the state of Irish affairs. When he formed his last administration, he was reconciled to his principal opponent at Dublin during the Union controversy, Mr. Foster, the late Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. This able man was appointed to the office, not yet abolished, of Chancellor of the Exchequer for Ireland. But in that office, and with a seat in the Imperial Parliament, his very ability, his very influence, led to constant conflicts with the Lord Lieutenant

[7] See the Castlereagh Correspondence, vol. vi. p. 12. Lord Castlereagh's own Memorandum on Boulogne is given in another passage of the same compilation, vol. v. p. 91, ed. 1851.

and the Chief Secretary. The framing and the passing of the Irish Bills could not be harmoniously adjusted between them. On one occasion Mr. Foster wrote to Pitt with a direct tender of his resignation, and at other times chafed and complained. Lord Hardwicke on his part, though in an amicable spirit to the Ministry, desired to quit the scene. Finally, Mr. Pitt found it indispensable to change the executive Government at Dublin. For the new Lord Lieutenant he selected the son and successor of the great Lord Clive, who in the preceding year had been promoted to the Earldom of Powis; and as Chief Secretary he sent his tried and trusty friend Mr. Long.

At this time Mr. Pitt was busied, conjointly with Lord Castlereagh, in planning an expedition to the north of Germany, which they hoped might both recover Hanover to the King and afford an important diversion to the Austrians. It was to consist at the outset of about eighteen thousand men, and was placed under the command, first of General Don, and subsequently of Lord Cathcart.[8] In this army Sir Arthur Wellesley was appointed to command a brigade; and the first regiments sailed towards the beginning of November. There was also sent out a much smaller force—between three and four thousand men—under Sir James Craig, to co-operate with a Russian armament in the Bay of Naples.

Events far mightier were now in progress. General

[8] See the instructions to Lieut.-Gen. Don in the Castlereagh Correspondence, vol. vi. p. 13, and the appointment of Lord Cathcart, p. 56.

Mack had taken post at Ulm, a strong position in which he might command the course of the Danube, and confront the French as they came forward from the Rhine. But the Emperor Napoleon, by some rapid and masterly marches, took him in the rear. Of a sudden the Austrian General found himself shut out from all communication with the Austrian states. Confusion ensued in his councils, and separation in his ranks. Two bodies of troops broke loose and made their way from Ulm; the one in the direction of Tyrol, the other in the direction of Bohemia. In a few days Mack himself, surrounded and hemmed in on all sides, had no resource but unconditional surrender. On the 19th of October his capitulation was signed. Next day issuing forth from the city-gates in the presence of Napoleon, he laid down his arms at the head of thirty thousand excellent troops. It was one of the heaviest reverses that ever befell the Imperial House of Germany.

The tidings of this capitulation reached London at first as a mere unauthenticated rumour. Pitt gave no credit to it. On the 2nd of November Lord Malmesbury dined with him, and being his next neighbour at table spoke to him of the report which was current. "Don't believe a word of it; it is all a fiction," answered Pitt, almost peevishly, and in so loud a voice as to be heard by all who were near them. "But," so continues Lord Malmesbury in his journal, "next day, which was Sunday the 3rd, he and Lord Mulgrave came to me in Spring Gardens about one o'clock, with a Dutch newspaper in which the capitulation of Ulm was inserted at full length. As they neither of them understood Dutch,

and as all the offices were empty, they came to me to translate it, which I did as well as I could; and I observed but too clearly the effect it had on Pitt, though he did his utmost to conceal it. This was the last time I saw him. The visit has left an indelible impression on my mind, as his manner and look were not his own, and gave me, in spite of myself, a foreboding of the loss with which we were threatened."

Within four days, however, the general gloom in England was changed to as general though not unmingled joy. Tidings of no common triumph came from off Cadiz. After some weeks of rest inside that port, Admiral de Villeneuve issued forth, with vessels not only much augmented in number, but newly equipped and appointed. Combined with Gravina he had thirty-three ships of the line and seven frigates, while Nelson had but twenty-seven of the first and four of the latter. At daybreak, on the 21st of October, the two fleets neared each other; the chiefs and crews on both sides full of ardour and impatient to engage. They were within sight of Cape Trafalgar, from which the ensuing battle has derived its name. Then it was that Nelson sent forth his famous signal to his fleet: "England expects every man to do his duty."

To Collingwood, as to the next in command, Nelson had imparted his plan of attack several days before. It was to sail forward in two lines; Collingwood in charge of the second to break through the enemy about the twelfth ship from their rear, and Nelson himself to lead through the centre. Thus did the fleet advance; Nelson and Collingwood each leading his line. The

battle began a few minutes before noon. Nelson stood on the quarter-deck of the Victory dressed as usual in his Admiral's frockcoat, and bearing on his breast the stars of his several Orders. These he would not consent to lay aside or to conceal. "In honour I gained them," he said on a like occasion, "and in honour I will die with them." In this manner he became a conspicuous mark to the riflemen upon the mizen-mast of the French ship the Redoutable. He was struck by a shot through the shoulder in the very heat of action. He fell upon his face, and being borne below expired three hours afterwards. The last words which he was heard to gasp forth, and these more than once repeated, were: "Thank God I have done my duty." Happily he lived long enough to hear the glorious result of his exertions. He was assured that the victory was decided and complete. He was assured that fourteen or fifteen of the French and Spanish ships had already struck their flag. In truth the final result proved to be greater still. No less than twenty struck, though from a storm which immediately afterwards arose the greater number of these prizes were lost or went on shore. Villeneuve himself was among the prisoners, and Gravina was mortally wounded.

There is one consideration which may, I think, set in its true light the glory of Nelson. Our greatest naval exploits in the French Revolutionary War may be computed at six:—the First of June, Camperdown, St. Vincent, the Nile, Copenhagen, and Trafalgar; and of these six, four were achieved with Nelson's aid, and three with Nelson in the chief command.

Considering that Trafalgar and Waterloo, the two greatest victories by sea or land which our history can record, were fought within ten years of each other, it has sometimes occurred to me to inquire whether any man could be named who by any chance was present at both, and I once asked that question of the Duke of Wellington. He told me that he knew of only one—General Alava. At Trafalgar, the General was in the Spanish naval service, and on board the flag-ship; at Waterloo, as is well known, he stood by the Duke's side.

The despatches of Collingwood with the tidings of Trafalgar reached London on the 7th of November. Never yet did any tidings stir up in the public such blended and opposite emotions. Joy for the national triumph was dashed with grief for the hero's fall. Men felt that under such circumstances they could neither exult as they ought to have exulted, nor yet mourn as they should have mourned.

These twofold emotions were stronger in no man's breast than in that of the Prime Minister. Lord Fitzharris says in his note-book:—"One day in November, 1805, I happened to dine with Pitt, and Trafalgar was naturally the engrossing subject of our conversation. I shall never forget the eloquent manner in which he described his conflicting feelings when roused in the night to read Collingwood's despatches. He observed that he had been called up at various hours in his eventful life by the arrival of news of various hues; but whether good or bad, he could always lay his head on his pillow and sink into sound sleep again. On this

occasion, however, the great event announced brought with it so much to weep over as well as to rejoice at, that he could not calm his thoughts; but at length got up, though it was three in the morning."[9]

Fox likewise joined in the national feeling, although it is painful to observe in his mind some small alloy of baser ore. Here are his words to Lord Holland on the very day the news arrived: "It is a great event, and by its solid as well as brilliant advantages far more than compensates for the temporary succour which it will certainly afford to Pitt in his distress."[1]

On the 9th of November Pitt wrote as follows to Nelson's brother, the heir of his English barony:

Mr. Pitt to Lord Nelson.

"MY LORD, "Downing Street, Nov. 9, 1805.

"I feel a melancholy pleasure in announcing to your Lordship, by the King's commands, His Majesty's intention to confer on the heirs of your illustrious and lamented brother those honours which, had his life happily been prolonged for the benefit and glory of his country, would have marked in his own person the sense His Majesty entertains of his transcendent and heroic services.

"His Majesty has accordingly given directions for preparing a patent creating your Lordship an Earl of the United Kingdom, by the title of Earl Nelson of

[9] Note to the Diaries of Lord Malmesbury, vol. iv. p. 341.

[1] Correspondence, as published by Lord John Russell, vol. iv. p. 121.

Trafalgar, with the same remainders as are now annexed to the Barony which has devolved on your Lordship; and His Majesty will recommend to Parliament to settle an adequate income to descend to all the future possessors of this dignity.

"I cannot close this letter without expressing a hope that these marks of honour from the Sovereign, accompanied as they will be by every proof of public gratitude, will contribute in some degree to soothe the feelings of those who have to struggle with the weight of domestic affliction, added to the sense of national loss, which pervades the whole country.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"W. PITT."

In pursuance of the intention which this letter expresses, Lord Nelson was created Earl Nelson and Viscount Trafalgar. He further received a grant of 6000*l.* a-year, and a sum of 100,000*l.* for the purchase of an estate. An English Barony was also, with no more than strict justice, conferred on Collingwood—a man most truly "gallant and good," as, after Copenhagen, Nelson called Captain Riou.

On the 9th of November, the Lord Mayor's Day, there was, as usual, a great dinner at Guildhall. Pitt, as Prime Minister, had accepted the invitation, and went with some of his colleagues. His popularity, which had waned in these latter times, appeared on that day to shine forth in all its pristine lustre. On his way to the Mansion House he was greeted with loud acclamations. In Cheapside the multitude took off the horses from his carriage, and drew him exultingly along. At the ban-

quet the Lord Mayor proposed his health as "the Saviour of Europe." Then Pitt rose, and spoke nearly as follows:—"I return you many thanks for the honour you have done me; but Europe is not to be saved by any single man. England has saved herself by her exertions, and will, as I trust, save Europe by her example." With only these two sentences the Minister sat down. They were memorable words. They sank deep into the minds of his hearers. For, besides their own impressive beauty, they were the last words that Mr. Pitt ever spoke in public.

Among the other guests at that banquet was Sir Arthur Wellesley. My readers will certainly be well pleased to see his description of Pitt's speech and of Pitt himself at that time. I shall give it exactly as I noted it down on the same day that I heard it:

Notes of conversation with the Duke of Wellington at Walmer, October 25, 1838.

The Duke and I spoke of Mr. Pitt, lamenting his early death. "I did not think," said the Duke, "that he would have died so soon. He died in January, 1806; and I met him at Lord Camden's, in Kent, and I think that he did not seem ill, in the November previous. He was extremely lively, and in good spirits. It is true that he was *by way* of being an invalid at that time. A great deal was always said about his taking his rides—for he used then to ride eighteen or twenty miles every day—and great pains were taken to send forward his luncheon, bottled porter, I think, and getting him a beef-steak or mutton chop ready at some place fixed beforehand. That place was always men-

tioned to the party, so that those kept at home in the morning might join the ride there if they pleased. On coming home from these rides, they used to put on dry clothes, and to hold a Cabinet, for all the party were members of the Cabinet, except me and, I think, the Duke of Montrose. At dinner Mr. Pitt drank little wine; but it was at that time the fashion to sup, and he then took a great deal of port-wine and water.

"In the same month I also met Mr. Pitt at the Lord Mayor's dinner; he did not seem ill. On that occasion I remember he returned thanks in one of the best and neatest speeches I ever heard in my life. It was in very few words. The Lord Mayor had proposed his health as one who had been the Saviour of England, and would be the Saviour of the rest of Europe. Mr. Pitt then got up, disclaimed the compliment as applied to himself, and added, 'England has saved herself by her exertions, and the rest of Europe will be saved by her example!' That was all; he was scarcely up two minutes; yet nothing could be more perfect.

"I remember another curious thing at that dinner. Erskine was there. Now Mr. Pitt had always over Erskine a great ascendency—the ascendency of terror. Sometimes, in the House of Commons, he could keep Erskine in check by merely putting out his hand or making a note. At this dinner, Erskine's health having been drank, and Erskine rising to return thanks, Pitt held up his finger, and said to him across the table, 'Erskine! remember that they are drinking your health as a distinguished Colonel of Volunteers.' Erskine, who had intended, as we heard, to go off upon Rights of Juries, the State Trials, and other political points, was quite put out; he was awed like a school-boy at school, and in his speech kept strictly within the limits enjoined him."

I will here add some other reminiscences, which refer to exactly the same period—that is, October and November, 1805.

From the Note-book of Lord Fitzharris.

"I met Pitt at Lord Bathurst's, in Gloucestershire, where he passed some days. We went to church at Cirencester. In discoursing afterwards on the beauties of our Liturgy, he selected the Thanksgiving Prayer as one particularly impressive and comprehensive. The one 'In Time of War and Tumults,' he thought admirably well drawn up, as well as that for the Parliament; but added, with respect to the first of the two, that he never in hearing it could divest himself of the analogy between 'abate their pride, assuage their malice,' and the line in the song of 'God save the King,' 'Confound their politics, frustrate their knavish tricks.' I observed that Pitt was constantly taking down and quoting from Lucan, of which author he appeared to be extremely fond. Nothing could be more playful, and, at the same time, more instructive, than Pitt's conversation on a variety of subjects while sitting in the library at Cirencester. You never would have guessed that the man before you was Prime Minister of the country, and one of the greatest that ever filled that situation. His style and manner were quite those of an accomplished idler."[2]

From the Anecdote-book of Lord Eldon.

"I went with Mr. Pitt, not long before his death, from Roehampton to Windsor. Among much conver-

[2] Already published in a note to the Malmesbury Diaries, vol. iv. p. 347.

sation upon various subjects, I observed to him that his station in life must have given him better opportunities of knowing men than almost any other person could possess; and I asked whether his intercourse with them, upon the whole, led him to think that the greater part of them were governed by reasonably honourable principles or by corrupt motives. His answer was, that he had a favourable opinion of mankind upon the whole, and that he believed that the majority was really actuated by fair meaning and intention."[3]

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[3] Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 498.

CHAPTER XLIII.

1805—1806.

Mission of Lord Harrowby to Berlin — Pitt at Bath — His criticism upon Lord Mulgrave's and Mr. Canning's Poems on the Victory of Trafalgar — Napoleon in Vienna — Battle of Austerlitz — Treaty of Presburg — Effect of the intelligence on Pitt — Anxiety of his friends — His illness at Putney — His last letter — His interview with Lord Wellesley, and his opinion of Sir Arthur — Notes of the Hon. James Hamilton Stanhope — Narrative of the Bishop of Lincoln — Death of Pitt.

THE victory at Trafalgar seems to have given to the British public and to Pitt himself better hopes of the war in Germany. Wholly unconnected as were these two transactions, it is not surprising that men flushed with a great triumph at sea should not so readily despair of some similar success by land. It was thought that the events at Ulm would be soon retrieved. It was thought that the remains of the Austrian armies combining with the Russian would prove an overmatch to the French. It was thought that the King of Prussia, weary of his long wavering, would at last take part with Austria, and throw his sword into the scale.

The accession of the Cabinet of Berlin to one or other of the contending parties was, indeed, felt by both as a point of most vital importance. Napoleon

had lured it for some months past by the promise of Hanover. Pitt had endeavoured to arouse it by urging the dangers which impended to the independence of Germany and to its own. He also made the most liberal offers of subsidy if Prussia should be induced to join the cause of the Allies. To give the greater weight to his representations and his offers, he determined to send out a member of his own Cabinet, who had recently filled the office of Secretary for Foreign Affairs. This was Lord Harrowby, who was accordingly induced to undertake a special mission to Berlin, attended by Mr. Hammond, Under Secretary at the Foreign Office.

Meanwhile Mr. Pitt was much pressed by his physicians to make a journey to Bath, and he also hoped to find time for one or two short visits to his friends.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Carrington.

"Downing Street, Nov. 19, 1805.

"DEAR CARRINGTON,

"I should be most happy to be able now to fix a time for coming to you at Wycombe; but I may probably be kept all this week in daily expectation of hearing from Harrowby. As soon as I have done so (if the accounts are such as to admit of it), I mean to run down for a fortnight to Bath; and perhaps to repeat my visit there before Christmas, after coming back to town for a few days. All this, however, must depend a good deal on intermediate events. If you

pass the Christmas holidays at Wycombe, I hope to find two or three days for coming to you there.

"Ever sincerely yours,
"W. PITT."

Pitt, however, appears to have remained in London all through the month of November. During this time he made his preparations as best he could for the coming Parliamentary campaign. He decided to take into his Cabinet both Canning and Charles Yorke, thus strengthening his front rank by a large accession of oratorical ability. His intention was not as yet made public, but Canning told it in confidence to Lord Malmesbury, in whose journal it will be found recorded.

Mr. Charles Yorke was to have the Board of Control, which, as we have seen, Lord Castlereagh continued to hold as a temporary arrangement in conjunction with the War and Colonies; but there was to be no change as to the office already held by Mr. Canning.[1] The subject is referred to by himself in the letter which follows:

Mr. Canning to Mr. Pitt.

"South Hill, Nov. 27, 1805.

"You will always find me here. I hope you will not suffer your Bath journey to be deferred till it is too late to do you much good. . . .

"Could not you manage before you leave town to prepare the way for the actual accomplishment of the

[1] Compare on these points Lord Malmesbury's Diary (vol. iv. p. 343) with Mr. Rose's (vol. ii. p. 249).

business which was settled when last I saw you? I ask from no idle wish to have the thing hastened, or notorious; but as, when you now go, you will probably go to stay as long as you can, and as the time to elapse before the meeting of Parliament, even at the most distant supposable date, is not more than enough, I shall be anxious to have as much of it as is possible, to look with my own eyes at all that has been doing—at least from the time of the beginning of Leveson's mission—which (especially in Hammond's absence) I cannot do comfortably and to my full satisfaction by sufferance, and while you are away still less.

"Ever most affectionately yours,

"G. C."

Notwithstanding the strong wish which Canning here expresses, the formal arrangement was postponed by Pitt until the Session should be close at hand.

I may take this opportunity to notice that the letters of Canning to Pitt, as preserved among the Pitt manuscripts, always commence in this manner abruptly, neither with "My dear Pitt," nor yet "My dear Sir." Canning probably thought the first too familiar, and the last too formal.

It was not till the 7th of December that Pitt was enabled to proceed to Bath. There he stayed upwards of a month. There he received visits from several of his friends who went down to see him. Such were Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Mulgrave, and Lord Melville. The latter visit appears to have given great umbrage to Lord Sidmouth. "I hear," so writes Fox in his

Correspondence, "*the Doctor* talks of it with uplifted eyes, and says he cannot believe it."[2]

Even amidst the failure of health and the gravest cares of state, we find Pitt still appealed to by his friends on merely poetical questions. Lord Mulgrave had composed an ode on the victory of Trafalgar. He brought it down with him to Bath, and insisted on obtaining the corrections of his chief. Here is his letter, after some of these revising touches. But I shall insert only one stanza of the poem.

Lord Mulgrave to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR PITT, "Bath, Dec. 12, 1805.

"Dr. Calcott wants to have my song, and I want to get rid of it. You must therefore, as *Præceptor Musarum*, make your election (choice there may be none) from the following verses to replace those which, to use the Eton phrase, you have *marked*:—

. . . . . .

9.

"Th' ill-fated captures from their anchors torn
Part sink, part perish, on Iberia's shores;
In scattered fragments load the hostile shores;
Whilst on the angry waves triumphant borne
No British wrecks the victor fleet deplores."

"Your criticism has driven wreck into the plural number.

. . . . . .

"It is a strong proof of distance from Downing Street

[2] Letter to Lord Lauderdale, Dec. 17, 1805.

when I send you so long a despatch for a song; but after all your goodness about it, I had not resolution to send it off without your sanction, or at least allowance.

"Ever yours,

"MULGRAVE."

In a biographical work by one of Lord Mulgrave's sons, it is alleged that Mr. Pitt, on seeing this ode, found the fault that no mention was made in it of Admiral Collingwood. He regretted this the more, considering the humanity which Collingwood had shown in his efforts to save the drowning prisoners; and, taking up his pen, he is said to have added a stanza of his own as follows:—

"With Nelson joined, and sacred to renown,
Time shall record the second of that day,
Who to the glory of his Sovereign's Crown
Secured the lustre of its brightest ray."[3]

I must observe, however, that although the authorship of Pitt on this occasion is stated in very positive terms, no proof or corroboration of it, as through his handwriting, is adduced.

The battle of Trafalgar inspired also a much higher Muse than Lord Mulgrave's—the Muse of Mr. Canning. That gifted man wrote a poem of considerable beauty on that great event. I shall give the commencement only, transcribing it from the final copy in his own handwriting, which Mr. Canning afterwards presented to Lady Hester Stanhope:—

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[3] Memoirs of R. P. Ward, Esq., by the Hon. Edmund Phipps, vol. i. p. 171, ed. 1850.

Lines on Trafalgar.

" While Austria's yielded armies, vainly brave,
Moved, in sad pomp, by Danube's blood-stained wave,
Aloft, where Ulm's proud tow'rs o'erlook the flood,
Midst captive Chiefs the insulting Victor stood;
With mock regret war's fatal chance deplored,
And shamed with taunts the triumphs of his sword.
Then as the mounting fury fired his brain,
Blind with rash hope, of fancied conquests vain,
In rage of hate, and insolence of power,
(O! luckless boast and most ill-chosen hour!)
O'er England's seas his new dominion plann'd,
While the red bolt yet flam'd in Nelson's hand."

Now on these lines, ere yet finally corrected, Mr. Canning addressed a long letter to Mr. Pitt at Bath, soliciting his counsel, line by line, and almost word by word. Of these inquiries I shall give that part only which refers to the few lines I have already cited:—

Mr. Canning to Mr. Pitt.

" South Hill, Dec. 27, 1805.

" I send you the verses written out on a sheet of paper about the bigness of the Bellman's—who, I suppose, has by this time added a copy to your collection.

" If the news from the Continent has not reached you, you will perhaps have time to consider the *variæ lectiones.*

" Line 1st. 'yielded' armies. I am mightily pleased myself with this word. But there is a very good rule of an old tutor of Magdalen: 'When you find anything in your own composition that pleases you particularly, the safest way is to strike it out.' However, I leave it to be judged of by others. Its merit is accuracy. Perhaps it is *too* accurate. Pronounce.

"Lines 1st and 2nd. 'brave in vain,' 'vainly brave,' &c. The choice must be regulated in some degree by the adoption or rejection of the lines in the next paragraph, ending with 'brain' and 'vain.' If they are not adopted, I rather think the first reading the best.

"Line 7th. Here are three forms to choose. As it stood before, 'Then in the rage of hate and pride of power,' 'pride' is objectionable. It occurs too often already; and, as applied to Bonaparte, twice at the end of lines in the course of the next ten couplets.

"And I doubt whether 'blind to the fates,' &c., simply, unless blind by some fault and presumption of his own, is saying anything. Who is not so? And blamelessly?

. . . . . .

"I am again here, depending upon hearing the news from you.

"I hope you have not forgotten to write upon the subject that we last talked of. I am *now* impatient, which you will do me the justice to recollect I have not been till time became a matter of consequence.

"I hope you have, above all things, continued to get well.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"G. C."

During this time the Emperor Napoleon in Germany was pursuing his victorious career. From Ulm he had marched to Munich, and reinstated the Elector of Bavaria, his ally. Still driving the Austrian troops before them, and advancing along the southern bank of the Danube, his vanguard entered Vienna on the 13th of November; while he took up his quarters in the neighbouring palace of Schönbrunn. The apartments in which he sojourned, then and in 1809, are still shown;

they are the same in which, at another period, his son expired.

On their part, the retreating Austrian forces took the direction of Olmütz, and effected a junction with their advancing Russian allies. But Napoleon left them little leisure to consolidate their strength. He followed them into Moravia, and gave them battle on the 2nd of December, the anniversary of his Coronation at Nôtre Dame. The action has derived its name from the adjacent town of Austerlitz. The Germans have also called it *die Kaiser-schlacht*, or the battle of the Emperors, since, besides Napoleon, Francis and Alexander were present in the field. Among the French, on the other hand, the phrase *le Soleil d'Austerlitz*, as first used by Napoleon, grew to be proverbial. See how Beranger, for example, has applied it to that army so often victorious:—

> "Et s'élancant du sol des Pyramides
> Pour voir briller le soleil d'Austerlitz."

For at Austerlitz the sun, till then thickly veiled in mist, of a sudden burst forth with more than wintry lustre, and cast its unclouded beams on the great scene of human strife. Before that sun had set, the Austrians and the Russians were scattered far and wide, leaving behind them fifteen thousand killed or wounded, twenty thousand prisoners, and one hundred and eighty pieces of cannon. This victory may perhaps indeed be regarded as the most splendid among the many that Napoleon gained. It decided not only the day but the campaign, and not only the campaign but the war.

The Emperor of Austria at once sued for peace, and was obliged to make considerable sacrifices before he could obtain even a cessation of hostilities. Finally at Presburg, on the 25th of December, he concluded a treaty according to the hard terms which the victor enjoined; yielding Tyrol to the Electorate of Bavaria, and Venice to the Kingdom of Italy. Russia soon followed in the wake of its ally, and the new Coalition was utterly rent asunder.

The ill success of the war in Germany was of course a powerful lever to the English Opposition. Both Lord Grenville and Fox had determined to press the Minister with the utmost keenness from the first hour that Parliament met. Lord Sidmouth, though professing greater moderation in his future course, was not at all more favourable to the recent policy of Pitt. "It will appear, I believe," so he writes even before the news of Austerlitz, "that Government has been both precipitate and remiss."[4] These two, I may observe in passing, were very convenient, because almost contradictory, epithets to urge. Any specific accusation that would not fit into the first basket would be quite sure to find a place in the second.

On the other hand, as we have seen, Mr. Pitt was taking measures to give strength to his Cabinet in the House of Commons. A question of some interest may thence arise. If against such adversaries, and with such support, in January, 1806, Mr. Pitt had been able to meet Parliament in moderately good health, would his

[4] Letter to Mr. Bragge Bathurst, Dec. 7, 1805.

administration have stood? For my part, I am of opinion that it would. There were the reverses of Ulm and Austerlitz to urge, but to set against these the triumph of Trafalgar. The latter had been achieved by our own prowess; the first, after all, could only be imputed to the fault or to the fortune of our allies. The question as to Mr. Pitt was really whether a close concert between England, Russia, and Austria, did or did not afford a reasonable prospect of prevailing against France. If there was that reasonable prospect, Mr. Pitt was not open to blame for concluding the alliance; and no vote of censure on that account could be, with any show of justice, pressed against him.

Moreover, setting aside for a moment reasons and causes, the English people at large could not fail to observe, as the ultimate result up to that time of Pitt's administration, that their insular security was increased. The project of a descent upon Kent or Sussex—a project still so rife in July, 1805—was in the January following altogether laid aside; and surely even the bravest men might deem this no mean advantage. We might be confident of repelling the invaders, and yet much prefer to have no invasion at all.

Looking to the temper of the times, it further seems to me that the more Mr. Fox or Lord Grenville or Lord Sidmouth had increased in vehemence, the more likely were they to lose in numbers. The popularity of Mr. Pitt had certainly in some degree declined, but I see no reason to doubt that it was still both deep-rooted and extensive.

It may be urged upon the other side, that several of

Pitt's colleagues at this time were deficient in Parliamentary eloquence and administrative vigour. But on this point it is well to weigh the opinion of Fox—an opinion expressed with too much bluntness, and indeed unfairness, as regards certain individuals, but still marked by his usual practical sagacity. Thus did Fox write to a friend in July, 1805:—"Upon the whole, I consider matters in the best possible train, and yet it does sometimes come across me—and I wish others would not quite forget it—that the Ministry with which this very Pitt set out in the year '84 was in all respects as weak and contemptible as the present."[5]

For these among several other reasons, I believe that if the health of Mr. Pitt had been sustained in 1806, his Ministry would not have been subverted; but the continuance of his health was an indispensable condition, and that condition, as will presently be seen, was not fulfilled.

The defeat at Austerlitz was indeed a most grievous blow to the English Prime Minister. It was the greater since, as it chanced, the first accounts from Moravia had announced a victory on the part of the Allies. As such the tidings had been laid before the King.[6] As such they drew congratulations from Mr. Huskisson, even in the same letter which states and which deplores the financial pressure of the war.

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[5] Correspondence, vol. iv. p. 89.

[6] Letter, printed in my Appendix, from Col. Taylor to Lord Castlereagh, dated Dec. 20, 1805. See also a passage in M. Thiers's History, vol. vii. p. 432. It was said that Napoleon had lost twenty-seven thousand men and his entire artillery.

Mr. Huskisson to Mr. Pitt.

"Treasury Chambers, Dec. 19, 1805.

"My dear Sir,

"Sir Francis Baring called here to-day to mention that, immediately after leaving you on the 5th instant, he wrote to Amsterdam by a safe opportunity to hint to Hope what was in contemplation. He has this day received an answer to his letter, in which Hope informs him that, before the receipt of the communication, they had sent an agent, *viâ* Paris, to Madrid, on some arrangements connected with the licences they now hold, but that they would send after him to desire he would do nothing respecting them, and that he would prepare the way for the further transaction, without, however, committing himself to anything without further directions. They are, therefore, very pressing for a decision. I am sorry to add that, notwithstanding all our endeavours, and all the specie sent in order to avoid any operations of exchange, it comes over worse and worse by every mail from the Continent; and if we had now to give orders to draw to any extent, it could not be done without a most heavy loss, and perhaps not at all; such is the embarrassment that prevails on the Continent since the loss of Vienna. In proportion as the exchange falls, silver of course rises. It is now 5*s.* 10*d.* per ounce, which is a rise of 14 per cent. on the price before the war. Sir Francis will call again on Saturday. I hope the news received to-day is sufficiently authentic to justify my congratulating you on the favourable prospect it opens, both to those who are, and to those who, I now trust, soon will be engaged in the war.

"I remain, my dear Sir, &c.,

"W. Huskisson."

It is no wonder if, after the tidings and the hopes of a victory in Moravia, which were conveyed to Mr. Pitt, the sudden shock of the contrary intelligence proved too much for his enfeebled frame, I shall here insert the statement on this point which was put in writing by my father, and which seems to have been derived from the domestics in immediate attendance upon Mr. Pitt at Bath.

Notes on Mr. Pitt.

"The immediate cause of his death was the battle of Austerlitz. I dined with him the day before his departure for Bath, when I found him in his usual spirits; and on inquiring after his health, I learnt from those about him that he had some flying gout, which it was hoped might become a regular fit. Such was, indeed, the effect of the Bath waters; but after he received the despatches containing the account of that most disastrous battle, he desired a map to be brought to him and to be left alone. His reflections were so painful that the gout was repelled, and attacked some vital organ."

Exactly to the same effect is the statement by Mr. Rose. "The waters there [at Bath] almost immediately threw the gout into his right foot, and soon after into the left; but on receiving the account of the armistice after Austerlitz the gout quitted the extremities, and he fell into a debility which continually increased."

Such was the effect of these causes combined on Mr. Pitt, that, as Lord Macaulay states it, though perhaps a little too strongly, "ten days later he was so emaciated that his most intimate friends hardly knew him."

It was not, let me observe, that the high courage of Pitt had even for a moment quailed. Had his bodily strength but endured, he would have borne up against Austerlitz with the same unconquerable energy of soul as he had against many other disasters and reverses in the war. Such is also the opinion of an accomplished critic whom I have more than once already cited: "The period was one of unusual care and anxiety, but Mr. Pitt's mind unquestionably possessed sufficient energy to bear the weight if his body had not been undermined by physical causes."[7]

Wilberforce often described with great feeling the care-worn and unhappy aspect of Pitt during the last months of his life, and Wilberforce was wont to call it "the Austerlitz look." The expression was striking and well chosen, but not exactly accurate, since Wilberforce never once saw Pitt after the battle of Austerlitz was fought.

A letter of Mr. Canning just after the evil news will show how anxiously the Prime Minister, in his communications to his friends, had endeavoured to cling to what remnants of hope remained.

Mr. Canning to Mr. Pitt.

"Somerset House, Dec. 31, 1805.

"I must thank you for your letter, which I have just received from South Hill, though I am vexed that you had the trouble of writing it. In town I have not collected any other circumstances than those which you

[7] Edinburgh Review, January, 1858, p. 170.

point out, to justify a disbelief of so formal and particular a statement.

"And what I recollect of the last despatch from Leveson, which I saw at Bath, tends to make the Emperor of Austria's part of the transaction appear too credible. But it is possible (is it not?) that the armistice may be true, and yet the game not entirely up. Russia is no party. Why should the Emperor of Russia withdraw? The reason which he is made to give, 'that he came to assist the Emperor of Austria,' is not sufficient. He has also a treaty with Prussia. I have not been very sanguine about Prussia. Yet the utter and ridiculous disgrace with which she must be covered if she does absolutely nothing, is a ground for hoping that if Russia does not give way, there may yet be an effort made to prevent Bonaparte from returning Emperor of the West.

"But still the extent of provisional cession by Austria is almost more than one can conceive any degree of defeat to have extorted. And the Archduke Charles's army—what is become of it? And all the Berlin accounts of the 10th and 11th, how are they to be accounted for?

"In this painful uncertainty, I shall nevertheless return to South Hill to-morrow. I hate to walk the streets in such ill news.

"Ever yours,

"G. C."

Here follow two letters from Mr. Pitt himself at this trying juncture. The one is preserved at Melville Castle, and endorsed as follows, in Lord Melville's hand: "Mr. Pitt; the last note I ever received from him;" Lord Melville being then with Pitt at Bath. The other is addressed to Lord Castlereagh.

Mr. Pitt to Lord Melville.

"Friday, Jan. 3, 1806, 1 P.M.

"I am sorry to tell you that the Mails arrived from Berlin confirm the account of the armistice and the retreat of the Russian troops.

"It is the more provoking, because subsequent to the action the allied army is stated to have been still 85,000 strong. Nothing is said of the Archduke Charles.

"(*Secret.*)

"The last despatch from Berlin is on the 18th. The Grand Duke Constantine had arrived with an offer to let all the Russian force join the Prussians.

"Harrowby had not been able to see Hardenberg subsequently, and the line of Prussia did not seem decided. However, little reliance can be placed on that quarter.

"Ever yours,

"W. P."

Mr. Pitt to Lord Castlereagh.

"Bath, Monday, Jan. 6, 1806.[8]

"DEAR CASTLEREAGH,

"I return the box which I received this morning. I agree very much with you that, in the uncer-

[8] This letter has been published in the Castlereagh Correspondence with the date of "Bath, Monday, December 6, 1805." No doubt the Editor was justified by a slip of the pen in Pitt, who, as in the next following letter, wrote "Dec." for "Jan." But (besides the internal evidence of the last paragraph, which of itself is decisive of the question) observe that the date as published is self contradictory, since the 6th of December in that year fell upon a Friday. Secondly, it is quite clear that the letter is in reply to one from Lord Castlereagh, dated January 5, 1806, and sent by messenger; which last letter is to be found in the same published Correspondence, although the Editor has failed to observe the close connexion between the two. See the Castlereagh Letters and Despatches, vol. vi. pp. 69 and 103, ed. 1851.

tainty of what may be the ultimate line of Prussia, it may perhaps not be to be regretted if Lord Cathcart should have directed the last division of our troops to return without landing. But, as far as I can trace, Lord Cathcart, when he wrote, had received only Lord Harrowby's despatch, written while the answer of Prussia was evasive. He will soon after have received that of the 23rd, announcing the positive assurance of security for our troops, on their observing the conditions specified, which are not unreasonable. Under these circumstances, I incline to think he will not have sent back any of the troops; and, if so, I confess I do not see how we can, in our instructions, make any distinction between the first and last divisions.

"The reasoning which you state in your letter for our consenting to let the former remain for the present, appears to me (under the general assurance now given by Berlin) to apply with equal force, and almost unanswerably, to the latter. I certainly feel a strong desire to see so valuable a body of troops at home; but I do not think the difference, at any rate, will be more than between the present time, and early enough in the spring for any defensive purpose here. By bringing them away now, I fear we should hardly give a fair chance to the good disposition of Prussia, if any such really exist. Whenever the troops must come away, I think the arrangement you propose respecting the Hanoverians is most judicious, and I am very glad it is approved. It hardly seems to me that we are yet ripe to send any fresh instructions to Craig.

"My second attack of gout is now subsiding, and I hope to recover from it quicker than the former; but I am sorry to say that I have more ground to gain, before I am fit for anything, than I can almost hope to accom-

plish within a fortnight. Bath is no longer thought of use, and I shall move as soon as I can.

"Ever yours,

"W. P.

"Pray have the goodness to mention what I have stated respecting the return of our troops. Whatever you and they, on consideration, decide, I shall be satisfied with."

Two days afterwards Mr. Pitt wrote his last letter, as it proved, to my father. It bears date Bath, Dec. 8, 1806; for in this letter, as in the last preceding, he put "Dec." for "Jan." by a slip of the pen. He thus begins:

"DEAR MAHON,

"I am grieved that a load of business, much beyond what I am equal to in my invalid state, has so long delayed my returning the papers you sent me. Richards's opinion is very satisfactory, and if it were not for one circumstance, would, I think, be conclusive."

Mr. Pitt then proceeds to offer a kind and excellent practical suggestion on a matter of legal business, which was of great anxiety to his correspondent, but which would be of no interest to the public. And he thus concludes:—

"But you must be aware that not having before me the drafts as they had been proposed, I can judge but imperfectly; and if, putting all circumstances together, you have reason to think the answer means only evasion and delay, it would certainly be right to have recourse at once to the Bill. I state this, therefore, rather for your consideration than as any fixed opinion.

"Ever affectionately yours,

"W. P."

During the last ten days of his residence at Bath Mr. Pitt was joined by his attached friend and physician Sir Walter Farquhar. He had also Mr. Charles Stanhope with him at that time. The meeting of Parliament had been fixed for the 21st of January, and on the 9th he set out with Sir Walter and Charles Stanhope on his journey homeward. On the day before, he had a parting conversation with Lord Melville. Then—so a year afterwards Lord Melville wrote it to Lord Eldon—"he emphatically said: 'I wish the King may not live to repent, and sooner than he thinks, the rejection of the advice which I pressed on him at Weymouth.'"

So much on leaving Bath was the strength of Pitt reduced, that it took him three days to reach his villa at Putney. On seeing him again, Lady Hester Stanhope was greatly shocked at his wasted appearance and hollow tone of voice. There is a little incident of him at that period which has often been related, but with some variations as to time or place, and therefore perhaps not derived from any direct authority. It is said that on leaving his carriage, and as he passed along the passage to his bedroom, he observed a map of Europe which had been drawn down from the wall; upon which he turned to his niece and mournfully said, "Roll up that map; it will not be wanted these ten years."

Some letters of this period will show how great was now the anxiety of his friends, and how warmly they pressed their hospitable care.

Lord Hawkesbury to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR PITT, "Whitehall, Jan. 7, 1806.

"I have just heard that, in consequence of the gout having settled in your other foot, it has been thought most advisable that you should leave Bath. I wish I could persuade you to come directly to Coombe: you will be there not only in a good air, but you will find a particularly warm house. You will be sufficiently near London for any person to come down to you on business, and at the same time free from the interruption and worry to which you would be unavoidably exposed in London. I trust, therefore, that you will not have the least scruple of agreeing to my proposal, and of going there directly from Bath, if that should be most convenient. You will find the house ready, and well aired.

"Castlereagh will have informed you of the general purport of our conversations with respect to the British troops on the Continent: I trust we shall soon hear of the return of those who were last embarked. It is most fortunate that the weather is so favourable as to render it scarcely probable that any of the transports should be locked up by ice. How lucky it would be if we could now hear of a successful attack upon Carthagena! Pray turn the question of Sicily in your mind. I confess I think no time should be lost in giving Craig some new discretionary instructions. If we should be *forced* to negotiate, consider the great advantage we should have in discussing the question of Malta with Sicily in our possession.

"Believe me to be, dear Pitt, &c.,

"HAWKESBURY."

Earl Camden to Mr. Pitt.

"DEAR PITT, "Arlington Street, Jan. 8, 1806.

"I am sorry to hear from Lord Bathurst that, though you are recovering from your second fit of the gout, you do not feel that your strength is restored, and that you feel not very confident that you will be able to undergo the fatigue of attending Parliament at first. You will hear from others of the Cabinet on the subject; but I wish at the same time to suggest to you my own opinion, as well as that of our colleagues, that if Parliament cannot be postponed for such a period as shall make it quite certain you can attend—which I understand to be the case—it is much better it should meet, and that you should not attempt to attend it. It is impossible that Opposition can press the discussion of the affairs on the Continent in your absence, and if they attempt it we ought to be obliged to them; and the common routine of business can go on in both Houses during your convalescence, and we will endeavour, with as few references as possible, to keep the machine moving on.

"I therefore see no difficulty to your considering that you have several weeks before it is necessary to exert yourself; and I have no doubt, from all I hear, you will be likely to recover long before, on public accounts, it is necessary.

"Lord Hawkesbury informs me that, instead of going to Salthill, which has been recommended to you, you should go to Coombe Wood, as your own house is somewhat damp.

"It occurred to Lord Chatham and me that if you liked to go to Long's, it might be prepared, though Coombe appears to be very desirable; and I beg to offer you Wilderness, which is perfectly well aired, if it

is not too distant. I trust it is unnecessary to say how much it is at your service, and that it cannot be the slightest inconvenience to me that you should go there. My family will remove in less than a week.

"Most truly and sincerely yours,

"CAMDEN."

Mr. Canning to Mr. Pitt.

"South Hill, Jan. 9, 1806.

"The wish which you express in your letter of yesterday (which I have this moment received) tallies so exactly with my proposal to Charles,[9] that I hope nothing will prevent your putting them into execution. I write a line to Sir Walter to enter into a solemn engagement with him not to talk with you or (so far as I can help it) allow you to talk upon interesting subjects, till you are fitter for it than you represent yourself to be.

"You shall have south rooms entirely to yourself, and see as little or as much of us as you please.

"And we have room for Charles and for Lady Hester, and for Sir Walter as long as he chooses to stay, or whenever he chooses to come back to you; and moreover, for Sturges, or Huskisson, or Castlereagh, or anybody else whom you may wish to see, whenever it is fit that you should see them.

"So pray come, and stay till you are better able to bear the neighbourhood of town. I trust Parliament can be put off. "God bless you.

"G. C.

"I need not tell you how anxiously Mrs. C. joins in my request."

[9] Hon. Charles Stanhope.

Mr. Sturges Bourne to Mr. Rose.

"DEAR ROSE, "Sunday, Jan. 12, 1806.

"Mr. Pitt arrived at Putney last night, having accomplished his journey with less fatigue than might have been expected; and I have been with him this morning by his own desire. His appearance was not worse than I expected, though it seems to have struck Lady Hester very much. He thinks himself, however, better, particularly in the article of sleep. He is, however, very, very weak, and has a horror of all animal food. You will derive some comfort from knowing that Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Baillie were waiting to see him when I came away. When he may expect to be able to attend to business and Parliament we must learn from them. He thinks of going to the Wilderness, which Lord Camden has offered him, and where he will be more out of the way of interruption. . . . .

"Yours ever, most truly,

"W. S. B."

Pitt himself was not despondent, nor at all aware of the coming danger. His early friend Lord Wellesley had just arrived from India, and had written to him at Bath. To that communication Pitt replied as follows. It is, so far as I can trace, the last letter that he ever wrote.

"Putney Hill, Sunday, Jan. 12, 1806.

"MY DEAR WELLESLEY,

"On my arrival here last night, I received, with inexpressible pleasure, your most friendly and affectionate letter. If I was not strongly advised to keep out of London till I have acquired a little more strength,

I would have come up immediately for the purpose of seeing you at the first possible moment. As it is, I am afraid I must trust to your goodness to give me the satisfaction of seeing you here, the first hour you can spare for that purpose. If you can without inconvenience make it about the middle of the day (in English style, between two and four), it would suit me rather better than any other time; but none can be inconvenient.

"I am recovering rather slowly from a series of stomach complaints, followed by severe attacks of gout, but I believe I am now in the way of real amendment.

"Ever most truly and affectionately yours,

"W. PITT."[1]

In the forenoon of Monday the 13th Pitt was able to take an airing in his coach, and later in the day he received the visit of his two principal colleagues, Lords Hawkesbury and Castlereagh. They had to determine with him some business that could no longer be deferred—the question of recalling the British troops from the north of Germany. They stayed but a short time, and endeavoured to spare Mr. Pitt as much as possible. Still he was much the worse for their visit, and next morning the ill effect was even more plainly observed.

Next morning, however, that is on Tuesday the 14th, Pitt went out again to drive in his carriage.[2] It was the last time that he ever left his house. In the after-

[1] This letter was first published by Lord Wellesley himself in 1836. (Quarterly Review, No. cxiv. p. 491.)

[2] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. ii. p. 25. The Speaker derived his information from Mr. Sturges Bourne.

noon his brother Lord Chatham paid him a visit. That day also Lord Wellesley came. The heart of Mr. Pitt glowed with gladness at the first sight of his dear and long absent friend. "His spirits," so writes Lord Wellesley in his reminiscences of 1836, "appeared to be as high as I had ever seen them, and his understanding as vigorous and clear. Amongst other topics he told me with great kindness and feeling that since he had seen me he had been happy to become acquainted with my brother Arthur, of whom he spoke in the warmest terms of commendation. He said, 'I never met any military officer with whom it was so satisfactory to converse. He states every difficulty before he undertakes any service, but none after he has undertaken it.'"

Any man who had the honour to know the Duke of Wellington will, I am sure, acknowledge how discriminating, how especially characteristic of His Grace's turn of mind, was the eulogy which Mr. Pitt here expressed.

But the excitement of this interview was too great for Pitt's enfeebled frame. He fainted away before Lord Wellesley left the room. This we learn from Lord Malmesbury's journal. Lord Wellesley without recording this particular incident proceeds to state the general impression which it left upon him: "Notwithstanding Mr. Pitt's kindness and cheerfulness, I saw that the hand of death was fixed upon him. This melancholy truth was not known or believed by either his friends or opponents. . . I warned Lord Grenville of Mr. Pitt's approaching death. He received the fatal intelligence with the utmost feeling in an agony of tears, and imme-

diately determined that all hostility in Parliament should be suspended."

Such were not, however, the anticipations of Dr. Baillie or Dr. Reynolds when they saw Mr. Pitt on Sunday the 12th. They said that the probability was in favour of Mr. Pitt's recovery; and that if his complaint should not take an unfavourable turn, he might be able to attend to business in about a month.

So early as the Saturday or Sunday the Bishop of Lincoln had arrived at Putney, where he remained in constant and close attendance on his early pupil and friend. On Wednesday the 15th Mr. Rose called; but by that time the physicians saw and felt the mischief which political visits, however kindly meant, produced. Thus writes Mr. Rose in his journal:—

"Sir Walter Farquhar, whom I found in the house, said so much on the subject that I positively declined going to Mr. Pitt on being requested by him to do so through the Bishop of Lincoln. Mr. Pitt then insisted that I should not leave the house till evening, and about eight o'clock Sir Walter brought me a message to say he was confident the seeing me would do him good. I therefore no longer hesitated, but went up to his room and found him lying on a sofa, emaciated to a degree I could not have conceived. He pressed my hand with all the force he could (feebly enough, God knows!), and told me earnestly he found himself better for having me by the hand. I did not remain with him for more than five minutes. The short conversation was quite general, as I felt it of importance not to touch on any topic that could agitate his mind in the slightest degree; and at ten in the evening I left the house.

His countenance was changed extremely, his voice weak, and his body almost wasted, and so indeed were his limbs."

On the evening of the next day Mr. Rose received a bulletin of health, as follows:—

The Bishop of Lincoln to Mr. Rose.

"Putney Heath, Thursday, 9½ P.M.

"MY DEAR SIR, (Jan. 16.)

"I will just tell you that Mr. Pitt has continued in bed the whole day quiet and composed upon the whole, and without any increase of unpleasant symptoms. He is going to be removed to his sofa for an hour. Sir Walter's report is *rather* more favourable. I hope we shall see you to-morrow.

"Ever yours,

"G. LINCOLN."

"From Thursday the 16th to Sunday the 19th," continues Mr. Rose, "there was no considerable alteration in Mr. Pitt. He took no nourishment of any sort except occasionally a small cup of broth, which seldom remained on his stomach; and he hardly spoke at all, though as entirely right in his mind as at any time in his life. The very little he did say to his physicians and to the Bishop of Lincoln (the only persons except servants who saw him) in this interval had not the remotest tendency to anything respecting public affairs."[3]

It appears, however, from the statement of another

[3] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 224.

writer of good information, that on the Friday Lord Chatham also was admitted to his bedside.[4]

But the most authentic and the most important narrative of Mr. Pitt's last days is to be found in some notes drawn up at the time by my uncle, the Hon. James Hamilton Stanhope. These notes will sufficiently explain themselves; and it only remains for me to state how they came into my hands. James Stanhope presented them to our kinsman, the Earl of Harrington. On Lord Harrington's decease they passed with other papers to his son-in-law, the Marquis of Tavistock, subsequently Duke of Bedford. The Duke in November, 1860, only a few months before his own lamented death, most kindly sent me the original manuscript, which, until then, I had never seen, nor even heard mentioned.

Notes of Mr. Pitt's last illness.

"I returned to Downing Street from Norman Cross, to which place I had escorted a party of French prisoners, on the night of Lord Nelson's funeral. Mr. Pitt was then on his way from Bath to Putney. I heard of his being very ill, but had not the slightest idea of the fatal event which shortly took place being so near.

"Among the accounts that I heard, the circumstance of Mr. Pitt having lost the deep tone and wonderful harmony which characterised his voice both in public and private, and that it had become feeble and tremulous, alarmed me the most. My sister remained entirely at Putney from Mr. Pitt's arrival till the dinner that

[4] See the Character inserted in the Annual Register, 1806, p. 882.

was given at Downing Street previous to the opening of Parliament. As he was advised to be kept very quiet, and an interview which he had with Lord Hawkesbury was productive of considerable evil, I did not go to Putney till Sunday the 19th, when I went in the carriage with Hester. When we came within three hundred yards of the house, Mr. Rose stopped the carriage. We immediately conceived the most dreadful apprehensions when we perceived him in tears, and his manner exhibiting marks of the most poignant grief. He said, 'I fear there is danger;' and I believe these were his only words. On arriving at the house we found the melancholy intelligence but too true, and that apprehensions were entertained for his life, owing to a typhus fever which had succeeded his state of debility. On the Sunday he, however, took two eggs beaten up, and on account of their remaining on his stomach considerable hopes were entertained by Sir W. Farquhar. He passed a tolerable night, but on the Monday evening [Jan. 20] grew worse. He passed a bad night, and on the Tuesday morning [Jan. 21] was certainly considerably worse.

"During these days a great number of people of all ranks called to inquire after his health. Lord Chatham called on Tuesday morning, but by the advice of Sir Walter and Doctors Baillie and Reynolds (who had been sent for on the Monday) was not allowed to see him. The Dukes of Cambridge and Cumberland, besides Canning, Sturges, Steele, Rose, &c., called on the Tuesday. On Wednesday morning [Jan. 22] his pulse was at times as high as 130. He was very faint, and could not retain any nourishment he took. It was then considered necessary to acquaint Mr. Pitt with his danger, which the Bishop of Lincoln did at about eight on Wednesday morning. Not being present

myself, I cannot decidedly state the particulars of the interview; but I understood that the Bishop offered to administer the Sacrament, which Mr. Pitt declined, alleging his unworthiness of receiving it. The Bishop prayed with Mr. Pitt for some time by his bed side. Mr. Pitt received the intelligence of his own danger with unexampled firmness, and expressed to the Bishop every sentiment worthy of a real Christian. He then stated to the Bishop of Lincoln his last wishes, which I need not repeat, from their having already appeared in the public prints. Mr. Pitt attempted to write himself, but was unable. He then dictated to the Bishop, and afterwards read what the Bishop had written aloud, and signed it in the presence of three witnesses, two of whom were the Bishop and Sir Walter, the other being his own and faithful footman, Parslow.

"After this was concluded, Mr. Pitt begged to be left alone, and he remained composed and apparently asleep for two or three hours. Doctors Baillie and Reynolds arrived about three, and gave as their opinion that Mr. Pitt could not live above twenty-four hours. Our own feelings in losing our only protector, who had reared us with more than parental care, I need not attempt to describe.

"From Wednesday morning I did not leave his room except for a few minutes till the time of his death, though I did not allow him to see me, as I felt myself unequal to the dreadful scene of parting with him, and feared (although he was given over) that the exertion on his part might hasten the dreadful event which now appeared inevitable. Hester applied for leave to see him, but was refused. Taking, however, the opportunity of Sir Walter's being at dinner, she went into Mr. Pitt's room. Though even then wandering a little, he immediately recollected her, and with

his usual angelic mildness wished her future happiness, and gave her a most solemn blessing and affectionate farewell. On her leaving the room I entered it, and for some time afterwards Mr. Pitt continued to speak of her, and several times repeated, 'Dear soul, I know she loves me! Where is Hester? Is Hester gone?' In the evening Sir Walter gave him some champagne, in hopes of keeping up for a time his wasting and almost subdued strength; and as Mr. Pitt seemed to feel pain in swallowing it, owing to the thrush in his throat, Sir Walter said: 'I am sorry, Sir, to give you pain. Do not take it unkind.' Mr. Pitt, with that mildness which adorned his private life, replied: 'I never take anything unkind that is meant for my good.' At three o'clock on Wednesday Colonel Taylor arrived express from His Majesty at Windsor, and returned with the melancholy [news] of all hopes having ceased. I remained the whole of Wednesday night with Mr. Pitt. His mind seemed fixed on the affairs of the country, and he expressed his thoughts aloud, though sometimes incoherently. He spoke a good deal concerning a private letter from Lord Harrowby, and frequently inquired the direction of the wind; then said, answering himself, 'East; ah! that will do; that will bring him quick:' at other times seemed to be in conversation with a messenger, and sometimes cried out 'Hear, hear!' as if in the House of Commons. During the time he did not speak he moaned considerably, crying, 'O dear! O Lord!' Towards twelve the rattles came in his throat, and proclaimed approaching dissolution. Sir Walter, the Bishop, Charles, and my sister were lying down on their beds, overcome with fatigue. At one [Jan. 23] a Mr. South arrived from town in a chaise, bringing a vial of hartshorn oil, a spoonful of which he insisted on Mr. Pitt's taking, as he had

known it recover people in the last agonies. Remonstrance as to its certain inefficacy was useless, and on Sir W. saying that it could be of no detriment, we poured a couple of spoonfuls down Mr. Pitt's throat. It produced no effect but a little convulsive cough. In about half an hour Mr. South returned to town; at about half-past two Mr. Pitt ceased moaning, and did not speak or make the slightest sound for some time, as his extremities were then growing chilly. I feared he was dying; but shortly afterwards, with a much clearer voice than he spoke in before, and in a tone I never shall forget, he exclaimed, 'Oh, my country! how I love my country!' From that time he never spoke or moved, and at half-past four expired without a groan or struggle. His strength being quite exhausted, his life departed like a candle burning out.

"Mr. Pitt during his illness frequently inquired after Charles and myself, and during his wanderings often repeated our names, in the same manner as he did Hester's after her leaving the room. At five I left Putney for Downing Street in Mr. Pitt's carriage, where with Mr. Adams we sealed up his books and papers, &c., &c. I made these minutes on the Sunday [January 26], and am therefore certain they are correct. "JAMES H. STANHOPE."

To this narrative I have only to add the statement of what passed when, on the morning of the 22nd, the Bishop of Lincoln and Mr. Pitt were alone together. The statement was made by the Bishop not many days afterwards to several friends of Mr. Pitt—to one of them, indeed, in the course of that very forenoon.[5] It

[5] Diaries of Mr. Rose, vol. ii. p. 230. Compare with this passage another at p. 254.

was since drawn out—in a form only perhaps a little amplified—by Mr. Gifford for his 'Life of Pitt.' We must therefore regard it, or at least the substance of it, as resting on the Bishop's positive and direct authority.

It appears, then, that the Bishop, in Sir Walter Farquhar's presence, went up to Mr. Pitt's bed-side, made known to him as gently as he could his state of imminent danger, and asked his leave to read prayers to him and to administer the Sacrament. Mr. Pitt received the tidings with perfect composure and firmness. Turning his head to Sir Walter, who stood on the other side of the bed, he said, slowly: "How long do you think I have to live?" Sir Walter replied that he could not say, and that perhaps Mr. Pitt might recover. Here Mr. Pitt half smiled, as showing that he well understood the little weight of such a phrase; and presently Sir Walter left him and the Bishop alone. Of the Sacrament Mr. Pitt said: "*that* I have not strength to go through." The Bishop then desired to pray with him. The answer of Mr. Pitt was as follows: "I have, as I fear is the case with many others, neglected prayer too much to allow me to hope that it can be very efficacious now. But"—rising in his bed as he spoke, and clasping his hands fervently together —"I throw myself *entirely* upon the mercy of God through the merits of Christ." The Bishop then read prayers, and Mr. Pitt joined in them, his hands clasped, with much earnestness.

Three weeks afterwards, when the Bishop and Mr. Rose were alone together at Buckden Palace, and

frequently reverted to their ever dear friend, the Bishop repeated the same account, adding, however, one other circumstance, which is nowhere else to be found recorded. "I learned," writes Mr. Rose, "that although Mr. Pitt was too weak to say much, he (when he spoke of his neglect of prayer) alluded to the innocency of his life, and expressed a confident hope of the mercy of God through the intercession of his Redeemer; and that with great fervour." [6] We find, then, that the remembrance of the "innocency of his life" was amongst the thoughts that consoled Mr. Pitt in his dying hours.

These religious duties having been performed, the Bishop next asked of Mr. Pitt his testamentary injunctions. "Although," said the Bishop, "you have no property to bequeath, your papers are of importance, and you may probably wish to give some directions about them." Mr. Pitt was too weak to write at length, but he dictated to the Bishop the substance of his wishes in three separate schedules, which he afterwards signed. They were as follows:—

Schedules.

"I owe Sir Walter Farquhar one thousand guineas from October, 1805, as a professional debt.

"W. PITT."

"12,000*l.*, with interest from October, 1801, to Mr. Long, Mr. Steele, Lord Carrington, Bishop of Lincoln, Lord Camden, Mr. Joseph Smith, and I earnestly

[6] Diary, Sunday, February 16, 1806.

request their acceptance of it. I wish, if means can be found for it, of paying double the wages of all my servants who were with me at my decease.

"W. PITT."

"I wish my brother, with the Bishop of Lincoln, to look over my papers, and to settle my affairs. I owe more than I can leave behind me.

'W. PITT."

With a most kindly thought for the situation of his three nieces, deprived as they were of a father's care, Mr. Pitt moreover expressed a wish that a pension of 1000*l.* or 1200*l.* a-year might be settled upon Hester, and a pension also upon each of her two sisters. "I am far from saying," he added, "that my public services have earned it, but still I hope my wish may be complied with."

The Bishop, on going back to his own room, found there Mr. Rose, whom he had desired to wait for him. He told him what had passed with Mr. Pitt both as to spiritual and as to worldly concerns; and he showed him the three schedules, with the ink hardly dry; and "I observed," says Mr. Rose, "that the signatures varied very little from the manner in which Mr. Pitt signed his name when in health."

On the 27th of February following the three Schedules, as constituting the Will of Mr. Pitt, were proved at Doctors' Commons by W. D. Adams, Esq., and W. Huskisson, Esq., on behalf of the two Executors, Lord Chatham and the Bishop of Lincoln.[7]

[7] Ann. Register, 1806, p. 383.

CHAPTER XLIV.

1806.

Embarrassment of Ministers — Meeting of Parliament — Effect of the intelligence of Pitt's death — New administration formed — Votes in the House of Commons — Parliamentary grant for the payment of Pitt's debts — Pensions to his nieces — His public funeral — Statues and portraits — Pitt's character — His religious principles — Goodness to the poor — Neglect of Literature and the Fine Arts — Skill in classical versions — As a public speaker — As Minister of the Finances — His conduct of the war — Conclusion.

It was not till past the middle of January that either friends or foes, for the most part, foreboded the approaching end of Mr. Pitt. In general his was thought to be only a case of enfeebled health or of slow recovery. But after Monday the 13th he had not been able to see any of his colleagues. Even by letter he could not be consulted on any point of public business. It was clear, on the most sanguine view, that the Session must be opened in his absence, and that three or four weeks at the least must elapse before he could resume his place in the House of Commons.

Under such circumstances the position of the remaining Ministers was one of great embarrassment and difficulty. On Sunday the 19th a meeting was held at Lord Castlereagh's, not limited to members of the Cabinet, but comprising also the Privy Councillors in office. The object was to consider the terms of the

King's Speech. It was agreed to render the Speech as unexceptionable as it could be, in order to take the best chance of unanimity on the Address. With this view some small alterations were made in the draft proposed. The King was to begin by referring to the decisive success at sea with which Providence had blessed our arms. His Majesty was to commend the family of Lord Nelson to some great mark of national munificence. He was to declare that the treaties of alliance entered into with Foreign Powers should be forthwith laid before Parliament, and to lament that the events of the war in Germany had so much disappointed his hopes. But it was to be urged, as a ground of consolation, that "His Majesty continues to receive from his august ally the Emperor of Russia the strongest assurances of unshaken adherence." The Speech was further to announce His Majesty's gift of one million sterling (part of his proceeds from the sale of prizes) to the public service.

The customary dinner in Downing Street in honour of the Queen's Birthday had been fixed for Saturday the 18th. Although the cards were already issued, several of Mr. Pitt's friends in office, considering his state of health, wished the entertainment to be postponed. But Mr. Pitt himself had particularly desired that the dinner might take place,[1] and take place it did accordingly. It was, indeed, a most mournful

[1] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. ii. p. 25. It would seem from this journal (and it may likewise be inferred from James Stanhope's notes) that this dinner was considered of importance. At Pitt's desire, Lady Hester went up from Putney to attend it.

meal. The conversation seems to have turned almost entirely on the rumours and reports from the sick-room at Putney. Canning said: "It was the relapse of a single day which reduced Mr. Pitt to the wreck he now is." That was the sad day of the Austerlitz despatch.

On Monday the 20th there was a second official dinner in Downing Street, when, in Pitt's absence, Lord Castlereagh read the King's Speech to the assembled guests.

Meanwhile on the Opposition side an Amendment to the Address had been prepared, reflecting on the disasters of the war in Germany, and imputing them to the course of policy in England. The Amendment was to be moved in the one House by Lord Henry Petty; in the other by Earl Cowper.[2] But the intelligence of Pitt's alarming illness wrought a change in this intention, and the result may best be told from the Journal of Francis Horner.

Journal, Jan. 22, 1806.

"A few hours before going down to Westminster there was a meeting at Mr. Fox's house of a few of the principal persons of Opposition; Cowper was there. Fox stated to them that he thought it impossible they could enter into the discussion; he could not while they had the idea that Pitt was in extremities—'*mentem mortalia tangunt*,' he said. Cowper described him as appearing to feel very sensibly the calamity of his distinguished rival; and he described it by saying that Fox appeared to feel more than Lord Grenville, who was present also."

[2] This was Peter Leopold, the fifth Earl, born in 1778. In July, 1805, he had married the daughter of Lord Melbourne, the Hon. Emily Lamb, now (1861) the Viscountess Palmerston.

Here, however, Lord Cowper was unjust, though not from any fault of his own. I have already cited the statement of Lord Wellesley, that Lord Grenville, when privately apprised, some days before, of Mr. Pitt's approaching dissolution, was melted to an agony of tears. What Lord Cowper saw was therefore the first emotion of Mr. Fox, but not the first emotion of Lord Grenville.

From this change of plan in the Opposition chiefs, there was but little of interest in the first day's proceedings. The Parliament was opened by Commission. When in both Houses the Address had been duly moved and seconded, Earl Cowper rose in one place and Lord Henry Petty in the other, and read forth the Amendment which they had designed. They alluded to the personal feelings from which they had forborne to move it; but they observed that the situation of the country would brook no long delay, and they announced that on the Monday following they would bring forward the same, or nearly the same, words as a substantive vote. In the Commons Mr. Fox rose next to express his concurrence in the course taken by his friends, and also his "indignation at those ill-concerted, ill-conducted, ill-supported, and ill-executed plans" of Ministers. Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Windham said each a few words, and the House adjourned.

On Thursday the 23rd the Members in due course were proceeding, with the Speaker at their head, to St. James's, to present to His Majesty the Address which they had voted, when they received intelligence that Mr. Pitt had expired at an early hour that morning. Scarce any one among them, perhaps, but was more or

less solemnly impressed. A great pillar of the state had fallen, and a new phase in politics had begun.

For near nineteen years in all Mr. Pitt had been First Lord of the Treasury, and undisputed chief of the administration. In stating this fact Lord Macaulay has well observed, that since Parliamentary government was established in England no English statesman has held supreme power so long. Walpole, he adds, was indeed First Lord of the Treasury during more than twenty years; but it was not till Walpole had been for some time First Lord of the Treasury that he could be properly called Prime Minister.[3]

The King was not without some hopes that, even without Mr. Pitt, his Ministers might stand their ground. He conveyed to them an offer to that effect through Lord Hawkesbury, whom he designed as chief. But it appears to have been their unanimous opinion that such a scheme would not have the smallest prospect of success. Lord Hawkesbury therefore declined so shortlived a pre-eminence, although he took to himself the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, which was also left vacant by Mr. Pitt's decease.

His Majesty, who had in fact no other option, next applied to Lord Grenville; and in the first days of February a Ministry was formed, comprising the chiefs of the three parties which had recently acted together in opposition. Lord Grenville became First Lord of the Treasury, Mr. Fox Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and Lord Sidmouth Privy Seal.

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[3] Biographies, p. 231.

In the first interview of Mr. Fox at the Foreign Office with Count Stahremberg, the Austrian Minister, the latter asked: "Have you no difficulty respecting the Roman Catholic question?" To this Fox answered: "None at all. I am determined not to annoy my Sovereign by bringing it forward."[4]

The scope of the present work, however, is not at all concerned with the further political proceedings, except only so far as they conveyed tokens of respect to Mr. Pitt. So early as the 24th of January a notice for that object was given by the Hon. Henry Lascelles, the colleague of Mr. Wilberforce in the representation of Yorkshire. On the 27th he brought forward his motion. It was for an Address to the Crown, "that His Majesty will be graciously pleased to give directions that the remains of the Right Hon. William Pitt be interred at the public charge; and that a monument be erected in the collegiate church of St. Peter, Westminster, to the memory of that excellent statesman, with an inscription expressive of the public sense of so great and irreparable a loss, and to assure His Majesty that this House will make good the expenses attending the same." These were the exact words which the House of Commons had adopted in 1778 in honour of the great Lord Chatham. The friends of Mr. Pitt were determined to adhere to that noble precedent. They would neither add anything to these words to gratify their own devoted feelings, nor yet take anything from them to secure an unanimous vote.

The motion of Mr. Lascelles was seconded by the

[4] Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. ii. p. 435.

Marquis of Titchfield. It was warmly supported by Earl Temple and the Grenvilles. On the other hand, it encountered a keen resistance. Lord Folkestone was the first to speak against it. Windham also rose to oppose it, to the surprise and displeasure of those who remembered during how many years of his life he had been one of Pitt's Cabinet colleagues. Fox, who took the same course, was by no means open to the same objection. On the contrary, his speech deserves the praise of entire consistency, and not only of consistency, but of good taste and good feeling. "If," said he, "ambition, if the gratification of party feelings, were here my objects, it would be my interest as well as my inclination not to cross in this instance the views of the Noble Lord near me (Earl Temple), and other near relations of the deceased Minister, with whom I am now likely to be for the remainder of my life inseparably bound. . . . . If the mark of public respect were such as did not compromise my public duty in the compliance, no person would join in it more cheerfully and eagerly than I would. If, for instance, it had been proposed to remedy those pecuniary difficulties which Mr. Pitt had incurred in the course of his political life—if it had been proposed to do those things for his relations which his own acknowledged disinterestedness did not allow him to do—if it had been proposed to supply the deficiencies of his own fortune—I would most willingly consent that all this should be done in the most liberal manner. But it is a very different thing to be called upon to confer honours upon Mr. Pitt as an 'excellent statesman.' . . . . . It cannot be expected that I should

so far forget the principles I have uniformly professed, as to subscribe to the condemnation of those principles by agreeing to the motion now before the House."

In conversation subsequently with the Speaker, Mr. Fox said, "I was under great difficulties on this occasion; but I refused to waive my opposition to this vote, although Lord Grenville asked it of me as a personal favour." [5]

Lord Castlereagh, who summed up the debate on the part of the Ministers, acknowledged the liberal and candid tone of the great Whig orator, "who," he added, "spoke throughout by no means in the spirit of an adversary." He had no reason at all to complain of the course adopted by Fox and by Fox's friends; but he confidently appealed to the House at large. Nor was the appeal made in vain. The motion was carried by overwhelming numbers—258 votes against 89.

Before the House rose that night, notice was given by Mr. Cartwright, one of the Members for Northamptonshire, that on the Monday following, the 3rd of February, he should bring forward a motion for the payment of Mr. Pitt's debts.

The question of these debts had been a matter of anxious consideration among Pitt's personal friends. They held two or three small meetings on the subject. It was found that the outstanding bills, taken altogether, exceeded the assets by the vast sum of 40,000*l*. Mr. Wilberforce and some others wished to raise the money by private contributions; but from the very large amount required, they did not find the prospect of suc-

[5] Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. ii. p. 31.

cess so promising as at first sight it had seemed. It was under these circumstances that Mr. Cartwright gave his notice in the House of Commons.

Another question then arose. Should the application to Parliament include the further sum of 12,000*l.*, as advanced to Mr. Pitt by some friends in 1801? The Bishop of Lincoln, as one of the subscribers to that sum, argued that it should. To do otherwise, he said, would be to contravene the dying request of Mr. Pitt; but the other subscribers took a different view. One of them, Mr. Wilberforce, went so far as to declare solemnly, that if this further grant were proposed in Parliament, he would rise in his place and resist it to the utmost of his power. In the teeth of such a declaration the Bishop could not persevere. It was finally determined that the sum asked of Parliament should not exceed the 40,000*l.*[6]

Such then was the proposal which, in the form of an Address to the Crown, and without entering into any particulars, Mr. Cartwright made in the House of Commons on the 3rd of February. His seconder was Mr. Wilbraham Bootle, the same who in 1828 was raised to the peerage as Lord Skelmersdale. There ensued another long debate, though with no great difference of opinion. Mr. O'Hara, Member for Sligo, and Mr. William Smith, Member for Norwich, expressed some hesitation. They were very moderate, however, when

[6] Compare on this transaction the Diaries of Mr. Wilberforce (vol. iii. p. 248) with those of Mr. Rose (vol. ii. p. 243). Lord Malmesbury, who was not present, appears to have misunderstood the account that Lord Carrington gave him (vol. iv. p. 350).

compared to the Viscount Folkestone. "The public services of Mr. Pitt," exclaimed his Lordship, "I deny. His great talents I do not admit." But even Lord Folkestone added, that although he objected to the grant, he should not oppose it. In a more generous spirit both Fox and Windham rose to express the pleasure that they felt in assenting. "Never in my life," cried Fox, "did I give a vote with more satisfaction than I shall do this night in support of the motion." Finally it passed *nem. con.* The money was voted accordingly, and was paid to the account of the Executors.

There was also fulfilled the last request of Mr. Pitt in behalf of his Stanhope nieces. A pension of 1200*l.* a-year was granted to Lady Hester, and a pension of 600*l.* a-year to each of her two sisters. The warrants for this purpose were carried to the King for signature by Lord Hawkesbury before he retired from office. Lady Hester's, when completed, bore the date of January 30, 1806. But the pensions to her sisters were placed on a different branch of the Four and a Half per Cent. Duties, not payable, as the first, by the officer of the fund, who was technically called "the Husband." All the pensions on this inferior branch were subject to a yearly deduction of twenty-five per cent. from their nominal amount.[7]

The Public Funeral which the House of Commons had decreed to the great statesman was fixed for Saturday the 22nd of February. During the two previous

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[7] Appendix to the Third Report from the Committee on the Public Expenditure in 1807, pp. 149 and 324.

days the coffin lay in state in the Painted Chamber. At half-past twelve, on the appointed day, the mournful procession began to move from Westminster Hall. The pall was supported by the Archbishop of Canterbury and three Dukes—Beaufort, Rutland, and Montrose. Lord Chatham was of course the Chief Mourner. Immediately behind him walked six Assistant Mourners, among whom were Lord Wellesley and the new Prime Minister, Lord Grenville. The "Banner of Emblems," which followed, was borne by Mr. Spencer Perceval, supported on the left by Mr. Rose, on the right by Mr. Canning. In front, the "Banner of the Crest of Pitt" was borne by a kinsman of the family, Thomas Cholmondeley of Cheshire, supported by Morton Pitt and Wilberforce. Sir Arthur Wellesley and his brother Henry walked among the seven younger sons of Earls. There was the Speaker in his robes; the Lord Mayor in his collar and chain. There were a considerable number of the Peers; a considerable number also of the Members of the House of Commons; and the procession was closed by the officers of the Cinque Port Volunteers.[8]

Striking indeed, most striking, must the sight have been when the coffin of Pitt was lowered to its resting place in full view of the statue of Chatham. "It seemed," says Mr. Wilberforce, "as though his statue were looking down with consternation into the grave

[8] London Gazette, March 1-4, 1806. I have a copy of this among my father's papers, with some MS. corrections made at the time. Thus by some inadvertency the name of the Bishop of Lincoln is omitted in the printed copy. As joint Executor he walked directly behind the "Banner of Emblems."

which was opened for his favourite son, the last perpetuator of the name."[9] With no less feeling does Lord Wellesley describe the solemn scene: "We attended him to Westminster Abbey. There the grave of his illustrious father was opened to receive him, and we saw his remains deposited on the coffin of his venerated parent. What grave contains such a father and such a son? What sepulchre embosoms the remains of so much human excellence and glory?"[1]

The Monument to Mr. Pitt which the House of Commons had voted was for its execution entrusted to Sir Richard Westmacott, at the cost of 6300*l.* It was not raised, however, in the north transept near the place of his interment, but over the great western doors—a position far too high for general effect.

Even during the lifetime of Pitt a statue to him had been in contemplation. This was in the spring of 1802. The subscriptions for it had begun, and were in rapid progress, to the great wrath of the Opposition versifiers.

> "What! to a wolf a statue give,
> That scarce would suffer us to live?"

So begins a poem of Peter Pindar on the subject.[2] But the design was arrested by Pitt himself. He declared that he would not accept nor agree to an honour so unusual to any man in his lifetime. The sum already raised was therefore not applied, but was for

[9] Life, vol. iii. p. 254. [1] Letter dated Nov. 22, 1836.
[2] Works, vol. iv. p. 506.

the present vested in the public funds in the name of certain Trustees.[3]

Since the death of Mr. Pitt, however, and with the aid, I presume, of that subscription, two statues of especial merit have risen to his memory. The one, in marble, by Nollekens, stands in the Senate House at Cambridge; the other, in bronze, by Chantrey, stands in the centre of Hanover Square. Besides the first of these, Nollekens made several busts of excellent likeness, which have been often copied and repeated. One of the best of the originals was inherited by the present Earl Granville from his father, the personal friend of Pitt. In 1861 Lord Granville, with that liberal spirit which has always marked his character, presented it to the collection of the National Portrait Gallery.

Of the portraits, in oil, of Pitt, by far the best, and indeed the only good ones, are by Gainsborough, Hoppner, and Lawrence. The first was painted during the first years of his administration. It was often repeated by Gainsborough himself, and still more often copied by his pupils—sometimes in full length, sometimes in half length, and sometimes only in head size. One of the best of the originals, which is now in my possession, has supplied the engraving to the third volume of my present work.

Pitt on the other hand did not sit to Hoppner until his latter years. Of that portrait also there are numerous *replicas* and numerous copies. I have been assured that the two following are among the most

[3] Ann. Register, 1802, p. 184.

authentic: the one which belongs to the Marquis of Normanby, and is now at Mulgrave Castle; the other, which belongs to Lord Carington, and is now or was lately at Wycombe Abbey.

The portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence is at full length, and hangs in the great gallery at Windsor Castle. In point of artistic genius and merit it may be deemed to surpass all other pictures of Pitt. I was assured by the late Lord Aberdeen that Pitt never sat for it; but being on a visit at the Priory, where Lawrence had been invited, and where Lord Aberdeen was also among the guests, Lawrence applied himself all the time he was in Pitt's company to an intense study of his features, and as soon as he was again alone hastened to transfer his impressions to his canvas.

Of the drawings and sketches I would mention especially: first, the small sketch by Copley, taken of Mr. Pitt, as I conjecture, before he was of age. It has been twice engraved: first at the time by Bartolozzi, but by no means with Bartolozzi's usual skill; and secondly, as a frontispiece in the first volume of this biography. Next, the drawing by Edridge taken in 1801, and engraved in the course of the same year. It is a small full length, which represents Mr. Pitt in his every day attire and seated at his usual writing table. I have heard several persons who were intimate with Mr. Pitt declare themselves much struck at the faithful resemblance of this print.

Designing to reserve the rest of this chapter for a summary of Mr. Pitt's character, or for some scattered

facts which bear upon it, I will in the first place insert two communications which have been addressed to me.

Right Hon. R. N. Hamilton to Earl Stanhope.

"Chesham Place, June 30, 1861.

"MY DEAR STANHOPE,

"In early life it was my good fortune to hear many anecdotes of Mr. Pitt, which I now regret not having committed to paper.

"I well remember my father-in-law, the late Lord Elgin, describing the first interview he had with that distinguished statesman.

"It appears that Lord Elgin when a young man attracted the attention of the first Lord Melville, in consequence of a speech he made in the House of Lords on foreign affairs. Lord Melville, at that time known as Mr. Dundas, intimated to Lord Elgin that the Government was about to send some confidential person to Vienna on a mission that required secrecy and despatch, and invited Lord Elgin to undertake the charge. Lord Elgin was too glad to accept the offer, and on that day received an invitation to dine with Mr. Pitt.

"To his surprise he found Mr. Pitt alone, and naturally felt embarrassed at being tête-à-tête with the great Minister.

"Mr. Pitt's manner and conversation were so engaging as to set him at ease, and they sat to a late hour conversing on foreign affairs.

"When Lord Elgin rose to depart, Mr. Pitt told him that it was most desirable that he should repair to Vienna as soon as possible. Lord Elgin replied, 'I am ready to go to-morrow, but I have no instructions.' Mr. Pitt then stated: 'If you wait a little longer, you shall receive your instructions before you leave the house.'

He then called for writing materials, and proceeded to write the instructions himself. Lord Elgin observed that he wrote with wonderful rapidity, making at the time many erasures and alterations. When he had finished writing, he said: 'Here are your instructions; enclose them to Lord Carmarthen. He knows my handwriting, and will sign them at once.'

"Lord Elgin complied with Mr. Pitt's directions, and within twenty-four hours was on his way to Vienna.

"There was no *Circumlocution Office* in those days!

"Very truly yours,

"R. N. HAMILTON."

The writer of the next letter has not given me permission to state his name.

"July, 1861.

"Pitt was my earliest idol. I was five years old at the time of his death, but I remember it as yesterday. My mother at that time was living in great retirement during my father's absence on service; her children, of whom I was the eldest, were her chief, almost her only, companions, and I was of course proportionably precocious. She was an anxious and gloomy politician, but not more gloomy than the threatening aspect of the times warranted. To me famines, invasions, and Jacobins (Radicals as yet were not) were objects of real and present dread. I well remember the burst of uncontrollable grief with which my mother received the news of Pitt's death. I stood by in mute terror for some time, and then stole up to my own little room to cry unchecked (precocious patriot that I was) for my country. But do not suppose we were singular in our distress. Few as were the friends and neighbours we saw, I saw others, too, in tears. Politics had a reality then which in these days it is not easy to make understood.

"I forget when the late Lord Sidmouth died, and do not know whether it is possible you should have known him when you were a very young man.

"He was fond of talking of his political career. I remember his telling me one day that the first time Pitt ever met Burke in society after the quarrel with Fox was at his (then Mr. Addington's) house. Pitt was not at that time alarmed at the possible spread of French doctrines in this country, and in reply to some foreboding remark of Burke's, he said: 'Oh! I am not at all afraid for England; *we* shall stand till the Day of Judgment.' 'Ay, Sir,' retorted Burke, 'but it is the day of *no* judgment I am afraid of.'

"Believe me, &c.,

"——."

The story which this last paragraph relates was also told by Lord Sidmouth to Dean Pellew,[4] who has been enabled, by means of a contemporary note, to fix the exact date of the meeting in question, namely, Saturday the 24th of September, 1791. Besides Pitt, Burke, and Addington, the only other person present was Lord Grenville. It appears, however, from the contemporary note, that the dinner did not take place at Addington's house, but at Pitt's in Downing Street.

There is an anecdote which Lord Sidmouth was also fond of telling of Pitt in company with another eminent man. Pitt—so Lord Sidmouth used to premise—had a talent of improving a man's own sentiments, and returning them to him in a better dress. Once, when Lord Sidmouth had dined at Pitt's house, with Dundas

[4] See a note in Pellew's Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. i. p. 72.

discipline of the Church of England, and in every branch of general ecclesiastical history. His knowledge on these subjects was accurate and extensive. He was completely armed against all sceptical assaults, as well as against all fanatical illusion; and in truth he was not merely a faithful and dutiful, but a learned member of our Established Church." [9]

The goodness and gentleness of Mr. Pitt to all those who were any way dependent upon him formed a main feature of his character. To his domestics his indulgence was indeed carried to a most faulty extreme, since he did not, as he ought, control their expenses or review their accounts. To the poor families around him he was ever ready to stretch forth his helping hand. When I used to live at Deal or Walmer, many years ago, I heard several stories of the kind, which at this distance of time I do not perfectly remember; but in the course of last summer I was informed that there were still living at the village of Keston, near Holwood, two persons who, or whose families, had been in the employment of Mr. Pitt. I went over one afternoon to see them, and will here insert my notes of what they told me:—

Notes at Keston, August 24, 1861.

Russell, once assistant carter to Mr. Pitt, now aged 82, a hale and cheery old man:—"Mr. Pitt (God bless him!) was ever doing us some good thing. . . . If goodness would keep people alive, Mr. Pitt would be alive now.

. . . . . .

[9] Letter dated Nov. 22, 1836.

"He could ne'er abide to see any of us poor folk stand with bare heads before him; when he saw, as he came, any one uncover, his word was always, 'Put on your hat, my friend.'"

. . . . . .

Betty Elliott, whose father and uncle were wood-cutters of Mr. Pitt. As a child she heard a great deal of his constant kindness to the poor. "Surely he was missed when he went; he was a rare good gentleman."

Once her uncle being drawn for a soldier, and very unwilling to serve, Mr. Pitt gave him money to purchase his release. And the bailiff told him, "Mind you are not to go and thank master. He does not want to be thanked. If you thank him too much, he will never do anything else for you."

With the well-known humanity of Mr. Pitt and his kindness to the poorer classes, I much doubt if I need have noticed the wholly unsupported statement to the contrary of a foreign writer. In a new work, *La Femme*, by M. Michelet, is a passage which may be thus translated:—

"When the English manufacturers, though enormously enriched by their recent machinery, came to complain to Mr. Pitt, and said, 'We can do no more; we are not making money enough!' Mr. Pitt uttered a dreadful phrase—*un mot effroyable*—which weighs upon his memory. He said, 'Take the children!'"[1]

I observe that no authority whatever is alleged to corroborate this story, and I must take leave to offer it

[1] La Femme, par Michelet, Introduction, ch. ii. (p. 21, ed. 1860). I am sorry to find that M. Jules Simon has without inquiry adopted that story in his subsequent very valuable and interesting work, *L'Ouvrière* (p. 35).

a contradiction as direct and as decided as courtesy allows.

On no point in his life-time was Mr. Pitt more frequently assailed than on the strictness of his morals. It formed the burthen of the songs and squibs, and sometimes even of the speeches, made against him. As an Undergraduate at Cambridge, how cruel to repel the pretty flower-girls, "who came fresh from the country, and who only endeavoured to sell to the young gentlemen their roses and lilies!" So writes one satirist who had taken Holy Orders.[2] As Chancellor of the Exchequer, how unfair to lay a tax on all maid-servants, instead of flirting with two or three of them, as every gentleman should! So cried a whole chorus in the House of Commons.[3] Taunts like these find a ready echo in the days of youth,

"When all our locks were like the raven's wing."

But at another period they may be differently viewed. I have already cited the solemn testimony showing that Mr. Pitt in his dying hours derived consolation from remembering the innocency of his life.

It is observed by Lord Macaulay, as tending to explain the abstinence of Mr. Pitt from loose amours, that "his constitution was feeble; he was very shy, and he was very busy."[4] I do not deny a certain influence to each of these three causes; but I think it is clear, from the last words of Mr. Pitt to Bishop Tom-

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[2] Peter Pindar's Works, vol. iv. p. 507, ed. 1812.

[3] See the Debates especially of May 10 and June 8, 1785.

[4] Biographies, p. 183, ed. 1860.

and Adam Smith, the latter said to Lord Sidmouth after dinner, "What an extraordinary man Pitt is! he makes me understand my own ideas better than before."[5]

The impression left by the great Minister on all who knew him was indeed, on several points, of no common kind. It is the more striking, since, in many cases, we find it come forth incidentally. "Pitt, the most forgiving and easy-tempered of men,"—so says Lord Malmesbury while treating of another subject.[6] "Pitt is the most upright political character I ever knew or heard of,"—so writes Wilberforce to Bankes.[7] The observation of Rose upon another feature of his character is no less weighty:—"With respect to Mr. Pitt, I can say with the sincerest truth, that in an intercourse almost uninterrupted during more than twenty years I never saw him once out of temper, nor did ever one unpleasant sentence pass between us."[8]

The religious principles of Mr. Pitt were seldom if ever discussed by him in general conversation. "Pitt," said Wilberforce to Lord Macaulay, "was a man who always said less than he thought on such topics." But as to his real feelings upon them, no testimony can be stronger than that of the eminent man who, up to 1797, lived with him on terms of close friendship, and almost daily intercourse. "Mr. Pitt," so Lord Wellesley writes, "had received regular and systematic instruction in the principles of the Christian religion, in the doctrine and

[5] Life by Dean Pellew, vol. i. p. 151.
[6] Diaries, vol. iv. p. 185.
[7] Letter dated Oct. 4, 1804.
[8] Diaries, vol. ii. p. 234.

line, that there had been no indifference in him upon the subject. It is impossible that any man could derive any consolation on his deathbed from the innocency of his past life, unless there had been in his youth self-control to exert, and temptation to overcome.

It was not merely on this point, but on every other, that the feelings of Pitt were under the dominion of his resolute will. Whether in the debates of the Commons as their leader, or in the government of the country as its chief, he showed a thorough mastery over his own emotions, acting throughout, not on impulse, but on principle. With great truth does Lord Macaulay describe "his usual majestic self-possession."[5] This temper of Pitt well tallies with a reply from him which Lord Brougham has recorded. One day, when the conversation turned upon the quality most required in a Prime Minister, and one said Eloquence, another Knowledge, and a third Toil, Mr. Pitt said, "No; Patience."[6]

The self-command of Pitt is the more noteworthy, since in him it was not natural, but acquired. The very opposite disposition is ascribed to him in boyhood. "Eager Mr. William" is his mother's phrase in 1766. "Impetuous William" says his father at the same period. And in 1773 "William's ardour" is once again commemorated by Lord Chatham.[7]

Few men of note have travelled less than Mr. Pitt. His foreign tours, as we have seen, were limited to six

[5] Biographies, p. 225, ed. 1860.

[6] Lord Brougham's Sketches of Statesmen, vol. i. p. 278.

[7] See the Chatham Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 392 and 393, and vol. iv. p. 267.

weeks one autumn in France. He was never in Scotland nor in Ireland. I cannot trace him to any more northerly point than Lord Westmorland's seat of Apthorp, in Northamptonshire; and, except on circuit, he never went farther west than the King's Lodge, Weymouth.

It has often been charged against Mr. Pitt, that during his long administration he did nothing, or next to nothing, to encourage Literature or the Fine Arts, or to reward those men who were rising to eminence in those walks of life. I am bound to say that I consider this charge to be well-founded. In some cases it is no doubt easy to offer an adequate defence. In the case of Porson, for instance, it must, I think, be owned that intemperate habits, no less than democratic views, unfitted that eminent scholar for preferment at that time. But in the case of many others, as, for example, Cowper the poet, there were no such reasons to allege. In all these we seek in vain to trace the helping hand of the powerful Prime Minister. Even that scanty pittance which, under the most inappropriate form of an exciseman's place, was bestowed on Burns, appears to have been the gift, not of Pitt, but of Dundas.

I will here state the nearest approaches I have found of exceptions to this general neglect, as I fear I must regard it, on the part of Pitt. I call them approaches only, since, after all, they did not go further than endeavours and intentions.

In the first place, Pitt had wished to make Paley a Bishop. But the King, it is understood, resisted the proposal on account of the liberal tendency of some of

the views of government which the *Moral Philosophy* contains.[8]

Secondly, there were few warmer admirers than was Pitt of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, which came forth at the beginning of 1805. His conversation on the subject is commemorated in a letter addressed some years afterwards to the author by William Dundas: "I remember," says Mr. Dundas, "at Mr. Pitt's table, in 1805, the Chancellor asked me about you and your then situation, and after I had answered him, Mr. Pitt observed: 'He can't remain as he is;' and desired me 'to look to it.' He then repeated some lines from the *Lay*, describing the old harper's embarrassment when asked to play, and said, 'This is a sort of thing which I might have expected in painting, but could never have fancied capable of being given in poetry.'"[9]

A person of political eminence amongst us, writing to me in January, 1861, has made a striking reflection on this subject. "If Pitt neglected literary men, as Macaulay in his brilliant sketch accuses him of having done, Literature has amply revenged herself upon him; for it is difficult to say whether his great glory has suffered most from his friends or his enemies by means of the press."

In my first Chapter I described the ready skill which Mr. Pitt in his youth had acquired of translating off-hand into English the best Greek and Latin authors. Let me now give an instance of it as derived from his

[8] See the Diaries of Lord Colchester, vol. i. p. 474.

[9] See the letter to Walter Scott, inserted in Lockhart's Life, vol. ii. p. 225.

maturer years. It was told Mr. Rogers by Mr. Redhead Yorke, who was present, and Mr. Rogers has put it on record in his 'Recollections.' One day in Pitt's company some person quoted a sentence as follows from the Dialogue of Tacitus *De Oratoribus*:—

"Magna eloquentia sicut flamma materiâ alitur et motibus excitatur et urendo clarescit."

Another of the party observed that it was untranslatable; upon which Mr. Pitt immediately replied, "No; I should translate it thus:—

"It is with eloquence as with a flame. It requires fuel to feed it, motion to excite it, and it brightens as it burns."[1]

Of the style of Pitt in his speeches I have little to say beyond the details and the descriptions which I have already given in several passages of this work. I will only add that, according to the unanimous assurance of those who knew him well, he did not prepare the structure or the wording of his sentences, far less write them down beforehand. The statement of his friends upon this point is much confirmed by his own notes, as scattered among his papers. These notes, which are in his own handwriting, are all extremely brief; at most some figures for his finance, and some headings for his argument. Let me add, as instances, his only written preparation for two of the most renowned among his many great harangues.

[1] Tacit. de Orat., c. 36; and Rogers's Recollections, p. 178. The editor of these Recollections has transferred the authorship of the passage from Tacitus to Cicero; an error that would have greatly shocked Mr. Rogers himself.

Notes of Speech (*Dec.* 30, 1796).

(*First half of the MS.*)

1. Previous negotiations.

Wickham.
Emperor's note.
Denmark.

2. Lord M.'s negotiation.

Basis.
Some necessary and agreeable to usage — just and reasonable—(in principle) acknowledged (though contested, and have denied to be just) — (Intervening demand of *Ultimatum*).

3. Statement of terms (separate as to France and Allies).

Under what circumstances (Italy — Emp^r^).

By what considerations to be influenced. — Treaty—General balance—Particular importance.

On what principles, What offered, What asked, and for whom. — Cession from us no *acquisition*.

(Other acquisitions of France — Savoy — Nice — State of Sardinia).
(State of *belligerent* powers).
Netherlands—Extract from debate on Reunion — Barrier Treaties.
Wars for two centuries.

3. Openings for modification—Holland.

Do. Spain.

2. Conduct of France.

Demand for signing *Ultimatum*.
Sending away.
Basis.
Couriers.

[Former Basis.

Use of personal discussion — Demand of Plenipotentiaries—Offers of explanation.

1. No such separate law can be binding on other nations — Vattel — Mr. Fox — reason.

2. Not to be found in constitution (Sense not *public*—how understood).

3. If there does not apply to Belgium or given up as to colonies—

4. It applies as well to Ireland.

5. Not beloved by this — Primary Ass^{s} — *ab inconvenienti.*
   Colonies.

Constitution.
Article 1st. Indivisible.

3. What the basis and offer now is.
   Argument on French constitution and laws.

Treaties (Nebuchadnezar).
This as preliminary — statement of other points.
Holland left open.
Italy.
Germany.
Spain.
New acquisitions.
Navy.
Money.

Notes of Speech (*May* 23, 1803).

Acts since the Preliminaries.
Elba.
Etruria.
Louisiana.

Since definitive Treaty.
Black Sea.
Piedmont.
Germany.
Switzerland.

Cases which may arise.
Encroachments on Austria or other parts of Continent.
On powers guaranteed by us ..... Portugal.
Naples.
Malta.
Turkey.

On Maritime Interests	Spain or S. America. Portugal or Brazil. Holland or its Colonies. Egypt or Maritime Possessions of Turkey. N. America.
On objects immediately British ...	Shutting Ports of Europe. Sending forces to India, or advancing claims there. Press. French emigrants.
General state of Naval and Military preparation. Finance system. System of Foreign connection.	

The action of Pitt in public speaking was not such as might perhaps be guessed from his ever self-possessed and stately style. It was very vehement. So it was described to me by Lord Lyndhurst, who had often heard him. He would sometimes bend forward eagerly, and so far that his figure almost touched the table. This account well agrees with the statement of Francis Horner, who in 1796—then a very young, but even then a very intelligent eye-witness—used to attend the gallery of the House of Commons. Of the great Parliamentary rivals he observes: "The one (Mr. Fox) saws the air with his hands, and the other (Mr. Pitt) with his whole body."[2]

As Minister of the Finances, Mr. Pitt has been since assailed by divers accusations. He has been called improvident and unwise in the system of his Loans at the period of the war. But I do not think this charge

[2] Letter to Mr. J. A. Murray, Feb. 15, 1796. Memoirs, vol. i. p. 11.

very likely to be made again by any man of much weight after that very searching and convincing Essay published in 1855 by Mr. Newmarch, to which in a former passage I referred.[3] Mr. Newmarch, going through the Loans one by one, and contrasting the particulars of each with the market prices of Stocks, Long Annuities, and Scrip from January, 1791, to December, 1800, has shown that these difficult operations were conducted with high financial skill, and on the most favourable terms that the financial state of the country would allow. By a table of our Subsidies to Foreign Powers between the outbreak of war in 1793 and the Peace of Amiens in 1801, amounting in that period to upwards of fifteen millions sterling, and by another table of the prices and importations of corn between 1791 and 1803, with the amount of bounties for corn imported in consequence of deficient harvests (those bounties in the one year 1801 being little short of a million and a half), he has most clearly laid before us the further difficulties with which England had at that time to contend, and the impossibility, notwithstanding the immense increase of the taxation, of raising to the full extent the supplies within the year.

Besides, under Pitt's system there accrued a most important advantage, which could not have been expected under the system urged by certain of his adversaries—a large augmentation of yearly taxes in

[3] See vol. ii. p. 389. With the calculations of Mr. Newmarch in that Essay may be compared those of Mr. Gladstone in his speech of May 8, 1854.

the lieu of loans. Under his system, our commerce in the midst of war not only maintained itself, but grew and extended. This is most clearly shown in the series of thirty-one Finance Resolutions which, in July, 1799, Mr. Pitt proposed, and the House of Commons voted. It appears that the total value of all imports into Great Britain was, in the year ending January 5, 1784, 13,122,000*l.*; in 1793, 19,659,000*l.*; and in 1799, 25,654,000*l.* Taking the same periods, the total value of British manufactures exported from Great Britain was in 1784, 10,409,000*l.*; in 1793, 18,336,000*l.*; and in 1799, 19,771,000*l.* And the total value of foreign merchandise exported from Great Britain was, in 1784, 4,332,000*l.*; in 1793, 6,568,000*l.*; and in 1799, 14,028,000*l.*

It is also worthy of note that the system of more accurate account and strict economy in the details of the revenue, as established by Mr. Pitt in 1784, was never for a moment, even in the midst of a most costly war, relaxed or relinquished by him. This is a point on which just stress is laid in the valuable pamphlet on the National Finances, which was published in 1799 by Mr. Rose, then joint Secretary of the Treasury. "In attributing merit," he says, "to the adoption of such measures, we must not lose sight of the firm adherence to them under circumstances of the greatest difficulty."[4]

This general view will be found to be more and more

[4] Brief Examination, &c., by George Rose, Esq., 1799. See especially pp. 22, 50, and 54.

confirmed the further we go into details. Take, for instance, the department of Excise. So successful had been Pitt's administration of it, that in 1799 there were 747 fewer officers for the management of a revenue of twelve millions than in 1784 for a revenue of six millions. And in 1799, when the gross revenue stood at nearly twenty-two millions, the expenses of collection were only 3000*l.* more than in 1784, when the revenue was little more than fourteen millions.

In the Customs it is stated on authority in 1799, that since 1784 eighty-five offices had been abolished—all these absolute sinecures, in value from under 100*l.* to 2000*l.*; and all these, I need not add, pieces of most serviceable patronage in the hands of any Government.

Till the time of Pitt the Army Contracts had been a fruitful source of jobbing under every Ministry; above all, since the contracts were bestowed by private grant, and since the contractors were frequently Members of Parliament. In this case as in the case of loans, Mr. Pitt put a total stop to all danger of abuses by the simple expedient of free competition and sealed tenders.

At the Admiralty there was another change of no less importance. Ever since the reign of Charles the Second (prior to which there are no books extant), the payments for naval victualling and stores were made in bills payable at uncertain periods. Thus they were taken at a discount, which discount increased very considerably at every period of war. During the last five years of the American contest it had varied from eleven and a half to sixteen three-quarters per cent. Still no

remedy was applied to this enormous evil, until by a new regulation, which Pitt not only prepared, but embodied in an Act of Parliament. According to this new law, the Admiralty was required to make all its payments in bills drawn at ninety days, and these bills being always discharged with rigid punctuality came to be considered and accepted as so much ready money. Hence arose a saving to the public to the full extent of the discount formerly allowed.

With facts such as these before us we have surely good ground to assert that the expenditure of England with Pitt at the head of the finances, though large beyond all precedent in time of war, was at no time lavish. And that it was so large can scarcely call for any long vindication. I know not how further to argue against the man who does not think, or at least who will not own, that the most energetic measures at whatever cost were requisite while we were contending with such a nation as the French; above all, while they were either stirred to a feverish force by their first Revolutionary period, or else directed with consummate skill by the genius of Napoleon.

But it is urged that Mr. Pitt as Prime Minister might have refrained from entering into this formidable contest. It is no longer denied that up to the winter of 1792 he was most sincerely desirous of peace. Why then, it is asked, did he at that period change his course? I answer, because the French had first changed theirs. By their hostile measures against Holland, by their declared design to force the navigation of the rivers Scheldt and Meuse, they were assailing vested rights

which we had bound ourselves by treaty to defend. By their famous Decree of the 19th of November, they had called to insurrection the subjects of the neighbouring states, England of course included; and they had promised their full aid to those that would rebel. Had we overlooked the former, we should have been treacherous to our old allies; had we patiently borne the latter, we should have been untrue to ourselves.

It is urged, however, that even admitting the war to be rightfully declared, the conduct of it with Mr. Pitt as Prime Minister was not prosperous. Yet surely his friends are entitled to allege at all events two considerable exceptions to this charge. They may claim that under his administration there were the most splendid naval victories, and also, unless perhaps in his father's time, the most important colonial conquests, that our annals anywhere record. So large are these exceptions, that if acknowledged, they may amount to an entire disproof of the charge when made in such general terms.

But let us consider this charge as narrowed to the point of the three expeditions on the Continent of Europe:—to Belgium in 1793; to Brittany in 1795; and to Holland in 1799. With regard to the second of these, it must, I think, be owned that our Government had nothing further to do than to provide the requisite means. Any admixture of British troops, or any authority of a British commander, would have destroyed every prospect of a Royalist rising on the coast of France. The expedition was therefore, as of course, left to the direction of the Emigrant chiefs themselves, whose discordant counsels and whose hesitating move-

ments, as I have detailed them in my narrative, will most fully account for the failure which ensued.

In respect to the Belgium and the Holland campaigns, it is no more than just to remember that throughout the first we were disappointed in the friends of the French Princes, as throughout the last in the friends of the Dutch Stadtholder. Above all, we should bear in mind, as applying to both, the earnest desire—nay, determination—of George the Third to appoint the Duke of York to the chief command. Now the Duke, although he afterwards proved himself an excellent administrator of the army, probably lacked skill, and certainly lacked experience, for operations in the field. He had to contend against such chiefs as Hoche and Brune. He had to contend against new levies, it is true, but very numerous, full of courage, and fired with their first Revolutionary zeal. If, competing with such men, the English General failed, it may be asked of the same period whether the Austrian had any better fortune? Had the Prussian or the Dutch, the Sardinian or the Spanish? The result is therefore to be explained by other causes, and not at all by any fault or failure in the Prime Minister of England. It was certainly the opinion of several persons who at divers times conferred or corresponded with him upon this subject, and who were well qualified to form a judgment upon it, that Mr. Pitt displayed as much sagacity in planning military operations as he had ever done in civil or political affairs.

Such then as to his private qualities, and such also as to his public career, was Mr. Pitt. In drawing a conclu-

sion from the facts and arguments which I have now—fully I am sure, and fairly as I hope—laid before my readers, thus enabling them to judge for themselves of this mighty Minister, I readily acknowledge that my own view may be liable to question. Born as I was in his house; bred as I have been in a grateful attachment to his memory; seeking as I have ever sought, though on some points perhaps mistakenly, to maintain his principles, I could not cast from my mind a warm and earnest feeling for his fame. I could not if I would, and I would not if I could. Perhaps then I may claim too much for him. I may be in error when I venture to pronounce him the greatest of all the statesmen that his country has produced.

In my view at all events, whether that view be overstrained or no more than just, the very faults of Mr. Pitt were such as many other men might claim for virtues. If he had pride, it was only, as Burke so finely said of Keppel, "a wild stock of pride on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues." If he had ambition, it was only to serve his country, and not for any meaner aim. Disdaining for himself as perhaps no statesman had before both wealth and dignities, such as meaner minds are always craving—refusing not merely the Peerage which would have removed him from his proper sphere, but the Garter which he might, like Sir Robert Walpole, have worn in the House of Commons—he maintained throughout the rare combination of a most slender patrimony with eminent disinterestedness. "Dispensing for near twenty years the favours of the Crown, he lived without ostentation and

he died poor:" such is part of the inscription which the most eloquent and gifted of his pupils inscribed beneath his statue in Guildhall. His eloquence stands recorded by the most authentic testimony, and was tried by the most able competition. Combining within it almost every kind of merit, it could charm and delight and frequently amuse, while yet it awed his hearers. In his financial system, he was the first to unloose the shackles upon trade; and he gave his country in time of peace those resources which alone could nerve her arm in time of war. An assertor of religious liberty, and of equal rights to every denomination of Christians, he was respectful to the faith of others, steadfast and well-grounded in his own. In the most vehement attacks upon himself from an infuriated majority of the House of Commons, as in the gravest perils by which his country was assailed, the firmness of his mind was never even shaken, far less ever subdued. On the whole, then—

"Glorious was his course,
And long the track of light he left behind him."

May that course be followed—may that track of light be trod in, by many, very many, statesmen of the coming time! Some only can partake of its glory, but all may be guided by its ray.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM KING GEORGE THE THIRD TO MR. PITT.

1804 — 1806.

[There are no drafts among Mr. Pitt's MSS. of his letters to the King dated April 21 and May 6, nor yet of his letter to the Lord Chancellor for His Majesty's perusal dated May 2, 1804.

Copies of these important papers are, however, happily preserved, and have been most kindly communicated to me by William Dacres Adams, Esq., who was then Private Secretary to Mr. Pitt. S.]

Mr. Pitt to the King.[1]

Endorsement on the Copy.

(Transmitted through the Lord Chancellor on Sunday, 22nd April, and delivered by him to the King on Friday, 27th.)

SIR, York Place, April 21, 1804.

It is with great reluctance that I presume to trespass on your Majesty's attention; but, as the view

[1] The reader will not fail to observe in these letters, as established form required, the change of address from the first person to the third, according as Mr. Pitt was, or was not, in the King's service.

I entertain of public affairs will shortly render it my indispensable duty in Parliament to declare more fully and explicitly than I have done hitherto my opinions on the conduct of your Majesty's present Ministers, I cannot help feeling a most anxious wish previously to lay those opinions before your Majesty.

Your Majesty will do me the justice to recollect that, on retiring from your Majesty's service, it was my first wish to be enabled to give every degree of support and assistance in my power to those to whom your Majesty confided the administration of your affairs. I continued to give this support and assistance with the utmost zeal and cordiality as long as it was possible for me to do so consistently with my sincere and honest opinions on the state of public affairs; and even long after I saw considerable reason for highly disapproving many important parts of the conduct of Government, I still abstained from joining in any system of Parliamentary opposition. During the whole period since the commencement of the present war, although I have throughout seen but too much reason to lament the want of any vigorous and well-considered system on the part of Ministers adapted to the new and critical state of affairs, my great object has been, instead of seeking opportunities for censure, to contribute as far as I could, by the humble efforts of an individual, to supply what I have considered as important omissions, and to recommend more adequate measures for the defence of the country. The experience of now nearly twelve months, and the observation of all the different measures which have been suggested or adopted by Government, and of the mode in which they have been executed, have at length impressed me with a full conviction that while the administration remains in its present shape, and particularly under the direction of

the person now holding the chief place in it, every attempt to provide adequately and effectually for the public defence, and for meeting the extraordinary and unprecedented efforts of the enemy, will be fruitless. I am also fully convinced that the same causes which tend to weaken our security at home are equally calculated to preclude the chance of taking advantage of any favourable conjuncture to establish such a co-operation abroad as might rescue the Continent from the miserable and abject situation to which it is now reduced. With this impression, I consider the time as arrived when it is my indispensable duty, both to your Majesty and to the country, to avow these opinions, and to regulate by them my Parliamentary conduct.

I am not so presumptuous as to allow myself to hope that the sentiments I have thus presumed to submit to your Majesty should appear entitled to attention, or deserving of any weight in your Majesty's mind; but I flatter myself that your Majesty will condescend to receive them as a tribute of duty and respect, and as the sincere and honest opinions of one who is actuated by the warmest and most genuine attachment to your Majesty. On the same grounds I trust your Majesty will pardon me if I venture to add the assurance that, whatever may be the course of public affairs, and whatever may be my own personal opinion respecting the system of government which would be most advisable in the present state of the country and of political parties, it will be my determination to avoid committing myself to any engagement the effects of which would be likely to occasion, in any contingency, a sentiment of dissatisfaction or uneasiness in your Majesty's mind.

I am, &c., &c.,

W. PITT.

Mr. Pitt to the Lord Chancellor.

(To be laid before the King.)

MY DEAR LORD, York Place, May 2, 1804.

In conformity to what passed between us yesterday, I now proceed to state to your Lordship on paper the sentiments which I am desirous of humbly submitting for His Majesty's consideration.

It becomes my indispensable duty to entreat His Majesty's permission to lay before him distinctly and without reserve the best opinion which I can form respecting the nature and description of administration which appears to me likely to be most conducive to His Majesty's service, together with the reasons for that opinion; but in doing so, I am anxious at the same time humbly to repeat the assurance that I do not presume to request more from His Majesty than that he would condescend to give a full and deliberate consideration to the proposal which I feel it my duty to submit to him. If, after such consideration, and receiving such further explanation as the nature of the subject may require, His Majesty should feel insuperable objections to any part of the proposal, much as I must in that case regret His Majesty's decision, I shall feel myself bound to acquiesce in it; and if I should in that case be honoured with His Majesty's further commands to endeavour to form a plan of administration free from such objections, I shall be ready to obey them to the best of my power.

My opinion is founded on the strong conviction that the present critical situation of this country, connected with that of Europe in general, and with the state of political parties at home, renders it more important and essential than perhaps at any other period that

ever existed to endeavour to give the greatest possible strength and energy to His Majesty's Government, by endeavouring to unite in his service as large a proportion as possible of the weight of talents and connexions, drawn without exception from parties of all descriptions, and without reference to former differences and divisions. There seems the greatest reason to hope that the circumstances of the present moment are peculiarly favourable to such an union, and that it might now be possible (with His Majesty's gracious approbation) to bring all persons of leading influence either in Parliament or in the country to concur heartily in a general system formed for the purpose of extricating this country from its present difficulties, and endeavouring, if possible, to rescue Europe from the state to which it is reduced. The consequences of the French Revolution, universally understood and acknowledged, its effects in France, and Europe, and the world, and the present conduct and character of the First Consul, seem to have produced a very general desire that all the abilities and resources of the country should be exerted in meeting its present danger; and in pursuit of this object, all the points of difference, however great and important, which at a former period prevailed in this country, seem, to all practical purpose, to be superseded.

The various advantages which may be derived from such a comprehensive system as I have pointed at are so obvious that it will not be necessary long to dwell on them. It is, in the first place, evident that, zealous and united as the country appears to be at this moment in its efforts against the enemy, the present contest may probably be of very long duration, attended with great and heavy burdens, and likely to press severely on the resources and convenience of all classes

of persons. Under such circumstances, with the chance, always unavoidable, of unfavourable events in the course of the war, or of an aggravation of its difficulties from the accidents of the seasons, it is impossible not to feel that a system of this nature would furnish a security that cannot otherwise be obtained for our being enabled to persevere in the struggle with unabated vigour till it can be really brought to a safe and honourable issue. The same considerations which apply to this country separately, will operate as powerfully, if not still more so, on our means and prospects abroad. A firm and stable administration, not thwarted or embarrassed by any powerful opposition either in Parliament or the country, must furnish the best and perhaps the only chance of attracting sufficiently the respect and confidence of Foreign Powers, and of improving any favourable opportunity to unite them once again in a great and combined effort for reducing the power of France within limits consistent with the safety of other states, or at least of rescuing from its yoke some of those countries in whose fate, both from inclination and policy, we ought to feel most deeply interested.

In addition to these two great considerations, the state of Ireland, and the delicate and difficult questions which may arise respecting the internal condition of that country, are scarcely less deserving of attention. I need not repeat to your Lordship what has long since been known to His Majesty, how fully my own determination has been formed to prevent His Majesty being ever disquieted for a moment, as far as depends upon me, by a renewal of the proposition which was in question three years ago respecting the extension of privileges to the Catholics; but I cannot help seeing that, although my own conduct, under all circumstances, is fixed, there may arise moments of difficulty in which,

if this country remains divided by powerful parties, the agitation of this question may be productive of great inconvenience and embarrassment. The formation of such a system as I have supposed would, I conceive, among other advantages, effectually remove this source of anxiety, as I certainly can never suppose or wish it to be formed on any other ground but that of all those who might form part of the Administration joining in the same determination with myself to endeavour to prevent the renewal of any such discussion.

These are the chief considerations which have led me to the clear and conscientious conviction that nothing is so likely to ensure His Majesty's personal repose and comfort, and the future prosperity and glory of his reign, as the plan which I have thus taken the liberty of submitting to His Majesty's consideration; and I am therefore most deeply anxious that, after full reflection, His Majesty may deem it not unworthy of his approbation. In that event it would become my duty to entreat His Majesty's permission, before I entered further on any details, to converse both with Lord Grenville and with Mr. Fox, in order to learn how far it might be practicable to submit, for His Majesty's consideration, any arrangement which might include them, and a proportion of those who act with them, together with some of His Majesty's present servants, and other persons to whom I might wish to draw His Majesty's favourable attention.

I have now only to request that your Lordship will have the goodness to take the first convenient opportunity of laying this representation of my sentiments before His Majesty, together with the humble assurances of my constant sentiments of respect, duty, and attachment towards His Majesty, and of my deep and grateful sense of His Majesty's condescension and goodness in

the gracious communication which I had the honour of receiving through your Lordship. I have thought that this mode of submitting my opinion in the first instance for His Majesty's consideration at his most convenient leisure, was that of which His Majesty would not disapprove. I trust I may be permitted to hope, before His Majesty's final decision on the subject, he will allow me to have the honour of personally submitting to His Majesty any further explanation which any part of the subject may appear to require; and I cannot help also flattering myself that the whole tenor of what I have stated will appear consistent with that zeal and devotion for His Majesty's service which it has been my uniform wish that His Majesty should experience in every part of my conduct.

I am, with great regard, &c.,

W. PITT.

Queen's Palace, May 5, 1804.

The King has through the channel of the Lord Chancellor expressed to Mr. Pitt his approbation of that gentleman's sentiments of personal attachment to His Majesty, and his ardent desire to support any measure that may be conducive to the real interest of the King or of his Royal Family; but at the same time it cannot but be lamented that Mr. Pitt should have taken so rooted a dislike to a gentleman who has the greatest claim to approbation from his King and country for his most diligent and able discharge of the duties of Speaker of the House of Commons for twelve years; and of his still more handsomely coming forward (when Mr. Pitt and some of his colleagues resigned their employments) to support his King and country when the most ill-digested and dangerous proposition was brought forward

by the enemies of the Established Church. His Majesty has too good an opinion of Mr. Pitt to think he could have given his countenance to such a measure, had he weighed its tendency with that attention which a man of his judgment should call forth when the subject under consideration is of so serious a nature; but the King knows how strongly the then two Secretaries of State who resigned at that period had allied themselves to the Roman Catholics: the former,[2] by his private correspondence with a former Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,[3] showed that he was become the follower of all the wild ideas of Mr. Burke; and the other,[4] from obstinacy, his usual director.

The King can never forget the wound that was intended at the Palladium of our Church Establishment, the Test Act, and the indelicacy, not to call it worse, of wanting His Majesty to forego his solemn Coronation Oath. He therefore here avows that he shall not be satisfied unless Mr. Pitt makes as strong assurances of his determination to support that wise law, as Mr. Pitt in so clear a manner stated in 1796 in the House of Commons, viz., that the smallest alteration of that law would be a death wound to the British Constitution.

The whole tenor of Mr. Fox's conduct since he quitted his seat at the Board of Treasury, when under age, and

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[2] Mr. Dundas.

[3] The reference seems here to be to Lord Westmorland, and to the period of 1793 and 1794. Mr. Rose, in reporting his long conversation with the King at Weymouth in September, 1804, says: "I am persuaded His Majesty felt uncomfortably on the subject of the letters his Lordship (Melville) wrote to Lord Westmorland relative to the question of Catholic Emancipation while the latter was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—which letters His Majesty told me Lord Westmorland had shown to him, keeping them, with the others he had received on the same point, bound up in a volume." (Diaries, vol. ii. p. 164.)

[4] Lord Grenville.

more particularly at the Whig Club and other factious meetings, rendered his expulsion from the Privy Council indispensable, and obliges the King to express his astonishment that Mr. Pitt should one moment harbour the thought of bringing such a man before his Royal notice. To prevent the repetition of it, the King declares that if Mr. Pitt persists in such an idea, or in proposing to consult Lord Grenville, His Majesty will have to deplore that he cannot avail himself of the ability of Mr. Pitt with necessary restrictions. These points being understood, His Majesty does not object to Mr. Pitt's forming such a plan for conducting the public business as may under all circumstances appear to be eligible; but should Mr. Pitt, unfortunately, find himself unable to undertake what is here proposed, the King will in that case call for the assistance of such men as are truly attached to our happy Constitution, and not seekers of improvements which to all dispassionate men must appear to tend to the destruction of that noble fabric which is the pride of all thinking minds, and the envy of all foreign nations.

The King thinks it but just to his present servants to express his trust that as far as the public service will permit, he may have the benefit of their further services.

GEORGE R.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

SIR, York Place, Sunday, May 6, 1804.

I had yesterday the honour of receiving from the Lord Chancellor your Majesty's letter, and am very sensible of your Majesty's condescension and goodness in deigning to renew the assurances of your approbation of the sentiments of duty and attachment which it has

been my wish to manifest towards your Majesty. At the same time I cannot refrain from expressing the deep concern with which I observe the manner in which my sentiments appear in some respects to have been misunderstood, and the unfavourable impression which your Majesty seems to entertain respecting parts of my conduct. Your Majesty will, I trust, permit me in the first place to assure you that the opinions I have expressed respecting the person now holding the chief place in your Majesty's Government have not arisen from any sentiments of personal dislike to that gentleman; they have been formed wholly on the view of his public conduct, and rest on grounds which I have already taken the liberty of laying distinctly before your Majesty.

On the subject of the proposal made in 1801 respecting the Catholics, it has been far from my desire to renew any detailed discussion; but I feel it due to two of my former colleagues to express my persuasion that they were guided on that important occasion by very different motives from those which your Majesty has been led to impute to them; and in justice to myself I must beg leave to declare that my opinion on that subject was formed on the fullest deliberation, and that the measure then suggested appeared to me, for the reasons which I have submitted at large to your Majesty, to be as much calculated to confirm the security of the Established Church as to promote the general interest of the Empire. My opinion of the propriety and rectitude of the measure at the time it was proposed remains unaltered; but other considerations, and sentiments of deference to your Majesty, have led me since to feel it both a personal and public duty to abstain from again pressing that measure on your Majesty's consideration. The humble assurance of this determination on my part has been long since

conveyed to your Majesty, and recently renewed; and to that assurance, without any addition or alteration, I must humbly beg leave to adhere.

It now remains for me to express the extreme regret with which I learn your Majesty's strong disapprobation of the proposal which, on a view of the present state of affairs and of political parties, I thought it my duty to submit to your Majesty, for forming at the present difficult crisis a strong and comprehensive Government, uniting the principal weight and talents of public men of all descriptions. I have already stated that if, on full consideration, your Majesty should object to any part of that proposal, I am ready to acquiesce in that decision, and submit myself to your Majesty's commands; but I, at the same time, expressed my hope that before your Majesty's final decision, I might be permitted to offer such farther explanation as the case may appear to require. On a point, therefore, of this high importance, I cannot but feel it an indispensable duty again to request that you would condescend personally to hear from me the explanation of those reasons which satisfy me that such a plan of Government is best calculated to promote the only objects which I have at heart on this occasion—the lasting ease and honour of your Majesty's Government, the security and prosperity of the country, and the general interest of Europe. Unless your Majesty should so far honour me with your confidence as to admit me into your presence for this purpose, I am grieved to say that I cannot retain any hope that my feeble services can be employed in any manner advantageous to your Majesty's affairs, or satisfactory to my own mind.

I am; &c.,

W. PITT.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

May 9, 1804.[5]

Mr. Pitt humbly begs leave to acquaint your Majesty that he finds Lord Grenville and his friends decline forming a part of any arrangement in which Mr. Fox is not included. Mr. Pitt hopes to be enabled by to-morrow to submit for your Majesty's consideration the most material parts of such a plan of administration as, under these circumstances, he wishes humbly to propose. In the mean time there are one or two points on which he is anxious to receive your Majesty's commands in the course of to-day; and he will, therefore, avail himself of your Majesty's gracious permission by attending at the Queen's House at half-past three, unless your Majesty should be pleased to appoint some other time.

May 9,[6] 1804.

The King has this instant received Mr. Pitt's note. He shall with great pleasure see Mr. Pitt at half-an-hour past three, which will enable him to prolong his airing. It is not without *astonishment* he sees by the *Times* that the Opposition Meeting was held at Carlton House.

G. R.

May 13, 1804.

The King's nature makes him decisive and active when he thinks the public service or the honour of his

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[5] The King appears to have given Mr. Addington at the time a copy of this note. It has been published from that copy by Dean Pellew, but with the erroneous date of May 7. (Life of Lord Sidmouth, vol. ii. p. 287.)

[6] This letter of May 9 is the second addressed by the King to Mr. Pitt on the new administration; and that of May 13 is the third.

friends call for exertion. He knows those sentiments are most congenial to the disposition and character of his friend, and now most pleasing Chancellor of the Exchequer. His Majesty therefore wishes Mr. Pitt would come here as soon as possible, as he will promise not to detain him above a quarter of an hour, or at most half an hour. His Majesty is certain he can propose a Court arrangement that will save his honour as to Lord Hobart, whose conduct and attachment he cannot enough commend, and by that extricate Mr. Pitt from the difficulty of finding some provision for that Lord which has undoubtedly been promised to him. The King saw him late the last evening, full of duty and desirous to be told what line of conduct he ought to hold, but very humbly wishing to resign the Seals if that should not be thought inconvenient to the public service. Lord Hobart is not in the smallest degree apprised of the idea that has suggested itself to the King's mind, nor shall any one be apprised of it till His Majesty has seen Mr. Pitt.

G. R.

To the King.

(From a "Duplicate" in Mr. Pitt's writing.)

SIR, Wednesday, May 16, 1804.

Having received the enclosed opinion from your Majesty's physicians, we feel it an indispensable duty humbly to transmit it to your Majesty, and to implore your Majesty to give it your most serious attention. We take this step from the full persuasion that on your Majesty's strict and uniform compliance with what is here recommended, must depend the perfect re-establishment and preservation of your Majesty's health, and with it every thing that is most important to your

Majesty's personal comfort, and to the continuance of the full and beneficial exercise of your Majesty's Royal authority for the happiness of your subjects. On these grounds we are sure your Majesty will pardon us if we express our most earnest and anxious hope that while your Majesty allots to the transaction of important business such time as may be requisite, your Majesty will not suffer yourself to be fatigued by a greater portion of it than is necessary; and will think it right carefully to avoid too frequent or protracted audiences and conversations, and to conform in other respects to such proper management as may be thought indispensably necessary to perfect and confirm your Majesty's recovery, and to guard against the danger of any relapse; the apprehension of which, if these precautions were neglected, would become the source of continual anxiety and distress.

We are,

With the utmost deference and submission, &c.,

ELDON,
W. PITT.[7]

May 24, 1804.

The King returns to Mr. Pitt the warrants, having signed them. He desires Mr. Pitt will appoint Mr. Canning to be here for presentation at half hour past three, as also any of the Lords of the Treasury and Admiralty that are in town: the King would be desirous of seeing Lord Melville for a short audience at the same time.

The King sends one of the secret boxes which he has had new lettered to Mr. Pitt. If the two others be sent

[7] Among the MSS. there appears no reply to this letter.

here, they shall be lettered in the same manner by the bookbinders at the King's Library. No one but the King and Mr. Pitt has keys to these boxes, therefore they may be safely used by them.

G. R.

June 12, 1804.

The King cannot refrain from expressing to Mr. Pitt that he thinks the increase of majority the last night highly advantageous to the cause of good government, and that the more he reflects on Mr. Pitt's proposition now framing into a Bill in the House of Commons, the more he sees the judiciousness of the measure. He cannot think the line of conduct held by Mr. Addington is either wise or dignified. That of Mr. Yorke is open to more indulgence, he having been the adviser of all the alterations made in the mode of defence from the time of Lord Pelham's retiring from the service, and the not being a little wedded to his own opinion.

G. R.

June 16, 1804.

The King has no doubt but that, from the idea of no division being intended to take place until Monday, it had too well operated on the willing minds of lazy men; and perhaps a little more energy in the Secretaries of the Treasury might also have a salutary effect; for yesterday no notes had been sent to summon the attendance of the friends of good government. His Majesty trusts to the goodness of his cause, his own resolution to support the present administration with all his might, and to the spirit, uprightness, and talents of Mr. Pitt: this combination scarcely can fail of success—at least it will *deserve it.*

G. R.

Kew, June 20, 1804.

The King has received with the fullest satisfaction Mr. Pitt's account of the Defence Bill having been read the third time after only a short debate, in which one is sorry to see Mr. Windham took a part; but, though a man of a fine manly spirit, he seems by nature more inclined to oppose than to concur in any opinion that arises from others. His Majesty trusts that the activity shown by Mr. Pitt on this trying occasion will enable him to carry on the public business with more despatch and, at the same time, ease to himself, than could at first have been expected.

G. R.

Kew, June 23, 1804, 7·52 A.M.

The King intends being this morning at the Queen's Palace to receive his physicians. He will probably remain there for a couple of hours, and therefore wishes Mr. Pitt could call about twelve, as he is curious to learn some of the smaller colourings of conduct of Opposition, which could not well come within the compass of the note he has received from Mr. Pitt.

G. R.

P.S.—Since writing the above, the King has received Mr. Pitt's box with the favourable account of yesterday's proceedings in the House of Commons, which make him the more desirous of seeing Mr. Pitt this day.

G. R.

Windsor, Aug. 2, 1804.

The King felt no fatigue from the ceremony of Tuesday, as he was conscious he was acting as he ought; and the sentiments of the Speech were so thoroughly his own that they could not but invigorate him.

Weymouth, Aug. 26, 1804.

The King, on the application of Mr. Pitt, does not object to Lieut.-General Lake's being created a British Peer for the great successes in India; nor does he do so with regard to Brigadier-General Welsley's[8] being honoured with an extra riband of the Order of the Bath, provided Major-General Moore, to whom our successes in Egypt are chiefly owing, and Commodore Samuel Hood, obtain the same honour, and be senior to Brigadier-General Welsley.

As to Mr. Pitt's inquiries as to the King's health, it is perfectly good, and the quiet of the place and salubrity of the air must daily increase his strength. By the advice of Sir Francis Milman, who is here, the King will bathe in the tepid bath, in lieu of the going into the open sea. His Majesty feels this a sacrifice, but will religiously stick to this advice, but does not admire the reasoning, as it is grounded on sixty-six being too far advanced in life for that remedy proving efficacious.

G. R.

Cuffnells, Oct. 31, 1804.

The King is much pleased at Mr. Pitt's being able to keep off the meeting of the Parliament unless some account from Spain should produce an earlier meeting than in January. His Majesty is certain this addition to the Recess of Parliament must infinitely please the country gentlemen, and is no real delay to public business, as seldom more is done before Christmas than voting those supplies which the exigencies of the hour require.

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[8] Thus in the MS.

Mr. Pitt to the King.

Putney Hill, Dec. 17, 1804.

Mr. Pitt is anxious without delay humbly to acquaint your Majesty that, having been led by the approach of the Session of Parliament carefully to reconsider the state of political parties, and the degree of support on which Government can rely, he is impressed with a strong conviction that, although there is no reason to doubt of a sufficient majority to resist the attempts of Opposition, and to carry through the ordinary business of Government, considerable embarrassment might arise with respect to the vigorous and decisive measures which appear likely to be requisite for the advantageous prosecution of the war. He therefore considers it an object of great importance to secure, if possible, some material accession of strength before the opening of the Session; and as he sees no mode of obtaining it which is, on the whole, likely to be so advantageous under the present circumstances, or so conformable to what he knows to be your Majesty's sentiments, as to endeavour to reunite the friends of Mr. Addington in the support of Government, he thinks that he should be wanting in what is due from him to your Majesty's service if he suffered any personal impression arising from past transactions to stand in the way of such an arrangement. Should your Majesty approve in general of this suggestion, Mr. Pitt will have the honour on Wednesday of submitting to your Majesty more particularly his ideas on the subject. In the mean time he takes the liberty of adding that he has had occasion to learn that Mr. Addington's feelings correspond very much with his own.

Windsor, Dec. 18, 1804.

The King cannot omit one moment after reading the note of Mr. Pitt to express his joy at seeing the very proper state of Mr. Pitt's mind in suggesting a willingness to call forth the assistance of Mr. Addington and his friends to the support of Government. His Majesty has, from the first hour of meeting Mr. Pitt the last spring to engage him again into public life, intimated a desire of being the restorer of two friends to that state of affection which would be most gratifying to his own feelings, as well as advantageous to the ease of carrying on the public business.

The King cannot conclude without suggesting his long-formed and, he believes, just opinion, that a pension for life, for his most upright and diligent discharge of the duties of Speaker of the House of Commons, is the true reward Mr. Addington should obtain, which would please the House of Commons, who have ever applied for such a provision in the case of his predecessors on retiring, who had not half his merit; and in the present instance it would flatter His Majesty's feeling, as the proposition cannot with propriety be brought forward but by a Message from the Crown, and the motion to be made on it stated by Mr. Pitt, of whose services to the public none has been more predominant than the proposing Mr. Addington, then a young man, for Speaker of the House of Commons.

G. R.

Windsor, Dec. 25, 1804.

The King has received from Lord Hawkesbury the much-wished-for account of Mr. Pitt having seen Mr. Addington at Coombe Wood on Sunday, and that he is convinced their early habitudes of cordial affection are

renewed. This gives the King the more satisfaction as he is fully sensible that their personal attachment to him and to this country are the true causes of this most gratifying work. His Majesty could not refrain from giving Mr. Pitt this written testimony of his approbation, and has done the same to Mr. Addington.

G. R.

Windsor, Jan. 13, 1805.

The King receives with great pleasure Mr. Pitt's account of the very good disposition in which he found the Duke of Portland, of which there cannot be a stronger testimonial than the letter His Majesty has got from him this morning. The King has availed himself of Mr. Pitt's hint, and has in this answer strongly pressed him to continue a member of the Cabinet.

G. R.

Jan. 16, 1805.

The King is most happy to find the motion for the Address was moved and seconded with propriety. He does not think the speeches of Messrs. Fox and Windham can have been either necessary or have much weight with the House of Commons.

Jan. 31, 1805.

The King, on receiving Mr. Pitt's note, has directed Lord Hawkesbury to have the necessary instruments prepared for translating the Bishop of Norwich to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. The Bishopric of Norwich is worth £3200 per annum, therefore may prove an agreeable transition to those of the less valuable sees.

March 7, 1805.

The King is highly satisfied at Mr. Sheridan's motion for repealing the Act of the last Session of Parliament for raising an additional force having met with the fate it deserved. It is lamentable that Mr. Windham should so thoroughly, from views of opposition, forget that war is the principle on which he ought to pin his faith, and, consequently, if he had any idea of consistency, not join in reducing any means that can be proposed with a view to rendering the defence of the kingdom effectual.

G. R.

Windsor, April 9, 1805.

The King, though much grieved at the cause, is not unmindful of the great propriety of Mr. Pitt in acquainting him instantly of the fate of the motion of censure on Lord Melville for having suffered Mr. Trotter to derive benefit from balances of the public money. His Majesty trusts that in Lord Melville there has been no culpability, though there has been a great want of caution; and, in truth, the letter of exculpation he has lately published has not much mended the appearance. His Majesty would not act as ingenuously in return if he did not mention the names that at the moment occur to him as worthy consideration as heads of the Board of Admiralty—the Earl of Chatham, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Yorke; and, if a professional man, Lord Gardner; but the King means to be totally unbiassed to receive the name of any one of these, or any other person whom Mr. Pitt, on due consideration, may think best suited to support his administration

G. R.

Windsor, April 10, 1805.

The King has received this morning Lord Melville's resignation of his seat at the Board of Admiralty. He thinks it highly right that Mr. Pitt should take due time to consider who best can fill that essential situation; for the person most prejudiced against Lord Melville, if he could view the whole of his exertions at the Board of Admiralty, must acknowledge that in this department he has most fully done his duty. The present Recess will give Mr. Pitt due time to examine and propose such arrangement as may be most conducive to the public service.

G. R.

Windsor, April 22, 1805.

The King, from the moment of the unfortunate necessity of Lord Melville's resigning his seat at the Board of Admiralty, had no object but that Mr. Pitt should recommend as successor the person best qualified to supply the vacancy. As Mr. Pitt, on the whole, thinks Sir Charles Middleton answers that description, His Majesty will not object to it, nor to his being advanced to the rank of a Baron, but his attending Cabinet Meetings ought to be confined to subjects regarding the navy. At the same time the King thinks that it would be advisable, on this addition to the Peerage, to advance also Mr. Lygon, the Member for the county of Worcester, whose excellent character, steady support of Government, and very large fortune, place him in a situation without just competitors.

G. R.

Windsor, April 26, 1805.

The King is most highly delighted with Mr. Pitt's account that the continuation of Mr. Whitbread's asperity was checked yesterday by a majority of 78; and, on a second division, a Committee chosen by ballot carried by a majority of 131. His Majesty looks upon this issue of this event as solely owing to the temper and correct line of conduct held in the whole of this untoward business by Mr. Pitt.

The King is sorry to see that the City of London so far outstrips its true line of duty as to be coming forward in this business, which no ways regards personally that body. He trusts Mr. Pitt will settle with Lord Hawkesbury the proper answer: it should be very general and temperate, and not one to encourage the repetition of becoming haranguers on subjects not properly coming under their cognizance. Wednesday will be the day for receiving this Address.

G. R.

Windsor, April 30, 1805.

The King is much pleased with the issue of the debate of yesterday, as stated by Mr. Pitt, and doubts not that, with temper, the heat that has unfortunately been kindled in the House of Commons, by an incaution to be lamented, not defended, will soon subside. His Majesty cannot conclude without mentioning that till yesterday he had not the smallest idea that any uneasiness had subsisted in any part of the administration, and then he heard all was amicably adjusted. He thinks it but justice to his own sentiments to declare that, had any disunion arisen, he should have decidedly taken part with Mr. Pitt, as he has every reason

to be satisfied with his conduct from the hour of his returning to his service.

The King will not be at Kew this day, but has appointed Lord Hawkesbury to-morrow morning at eleven at the Queen's Palace.

G. R.

Windsor, May 5, 1805.

Though the King is much hurt at the virulence against Lord Melville, which is unbecoming the character of Englishmen, who naturally when a man is fallen are too noble to pursue their blows, he must feel the prudence and good temper of Mr. Pitt's proposing his being struck out of the Privy Council, and it is hoped after that the subject will be buried in oblivion.

His Majesty authorizes Mr. Pitt not only to give the proposed notice this day to the House of Commons, but to give the proper notice that a Privy Council will be held at the Queen's Palace on Thursday, at two o'clock.

G. R.

Windsor, May 14, 1805.

The King is not surprised, considering the enormous length to which gentlemen permit themselves to spin out their speeches, that it should have been necessary to adjourn the debate on the Catholic question from two this morning to the usual hour of meeting this day: it seems wonderful that the fatigue does not incline gentlemen to compress their ideas in a shorter space, which must ever be more agreeable and useful to the auditors, and not less advantageous to the despatch of business.

G. R.

Kew, May 15, 1805.

The King is most extremely rejoiced at the great majority with which Mr. Fox's motion for a committee on the Catholic petition has been rejected, and he trusts that such decided majorities in both Houses of Parliament so strongly show the sense of the kingdom on this most essential question, which His Majesty is confident if the opinions of the people without doors could be known would prove still a larger majority on this occasion, that he trusts it will never be brought forward again.

G. R.

June 12, 1805.

The King has great satisfaction in having just learnt from Mr. Pitt the appearance of the House of Commons yesterday, on Mr. Whitbread's motion for impeaching Lord Melville, and on the amendment of Mr. Bond for a prosecution in lieu of it, both of which he thinks can most justly be resisted. No one more sincerely blames the incorrectness of Lord Melville's conduct, but no one can be more adverse to any further measures being taken against him. All that is necessary for example to futurity has been done, and anything more is a wanton punishing of a fallen man, which is not the usual conduct of an Englishman, who never strikes his enemy when at his feet.

G. R.

Weymouth, Sept. 15, 1805.

The King perfectly coincides with Mr. Pitt as to the fitness of Mr. Long for the office of Secretary in Ireland,

but strongly recommends to Mr. Pitt the being very careful to choose a man of business to supply his situation at the Board of Treasury. His Majesty's sight will not allow him to add more, as though he gains some ground, he can neither read what is written to him nor what he writes.[9]

G. R.

Windsor, Nov. 11, 1805.

The King cannot refrain from just expressing to Mr. Pitt the joy he feels at the good news now forwarded to him of the capture of four of the line-of-battle ships that had escaped on the 21st of last month. His Majesty has just received from Lord Hawkesbury an extract of Lord Nelson's Will concerning his funeral, which has enabled directions to be given for his being buried at St. Paul's with military honours, which the brilliancy of the victory seems to call for.

G. R.

Colonel Herbert Taylor to Lord Castlereagh.

Windsor, Dec. 20, 1805.

I have had the honour of laying before His Majesty the various papers which accompanied your Lordship's

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[9] A great change of hand-writing appears in this letter and all those of subsequent date. It has grown much larger, and the characters are very indistinct and ill formed. This was owing to the failure of eye-sight. When at Cuffnells in October, "His Majesty," says Mr. Rose, "told me that he had nearly lost the sight of his right eye, and that it was with the greatest difficulty he could read a newspaper by candle-light with any spectacles he could get." (Diaries, &c., vol. ii. p. 196.) Since November, 1805, the King found it necessary to employ Colonel Herbert Taylor as his Secretary and *Amanuensis*.

letter on the subject of the late events in Moravia,[1] for the communication of which I am commanded to return you many thanks. His Majesty considers them extremely interesting, and as all tending to confirm the reports transmitted yesterday of the successful result of the arduous contest of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th instant.

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[1] The report, which proved utterly unfounded, of a great victory over the French near Austerlitz.

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